

SAYADAW U PANDITĀBHIVAMSA



# SPIRITUAL CULTIVATION

TRANSLATED BY MA CARUDASSINI

EDITED BY U HLA MYINT

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**Sayadaw U Panditābhivamsa**

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Edited by U Hla Myint

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## **Publisher's Note**

We are very happy to have the book "Spiritual Cultivation" completed and published for free distribution in a timely manner as planned. For this reason, we would like to take this opportunity to thank many people who helped us to continue to spread the Buddha's original teachings at Tathagata Meditation Center (TMC).

First, we would like to thank Sayadawgyi U Panditābhivamsa for giving us permission to publish his Dhamma talks during the 2007 Spring Retreat at Tathagata Meditation Center in a book form, Sayalay Ma Carudassini for translating Sayadawgyi's dhamma talks into English during the retreat, Laura DeGasparis for transcribing from audio CD's to manuscripts, and U Hla Myint for editing Sayalay Ma Carudassini's English translation. Last, but not least, are those who helped and contributed financially to make the book possible.

Sayadawgyi U Panditābhivamsa has devoted his whole life in spreading the original teachings of the Buddha, especially the Vipassana Meditation. He has trained thousands of people worldwide including those who have now become famous American meditation teachers. Sayadawgyi U Panditābhivamsa has come to the Bay Area of California, USA, to teach us Vipassana meditation even before the Tathagata Meditation Center was founded in 1991.

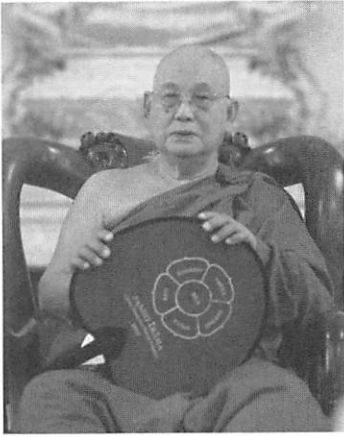
**In publishing this book, our goal is to benefit yogis, Buddhist devotees, and those who would like to learn about the Buddhist spiritual cultivation; and to show our deep gratitude to Sayadawgyi U Panditābhivamsa for his teachings and spiritual guidance at the Tathagata Meditation Center.**

**Tathagata Meditation Center**

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato  
Sammāsambuddhassa







## Biography of Sayādaw U Panditābhivamsa

Sayādaw U Panditābhivamsa is one of the foremost living masters of Vipassana meditation in the Burmese Theravāda Buddhist tradition. As a successor to the late Mahāsi Sayādaw, he has taught the Mahāsi style of Vipassana meditation to many of the Western teachers and students. He is the founder of the Panditārāma Meditation Center in Yangon, Burma.

Sayādaw U Panditābhivamsa was born on July 29, 1921, in the greater Yangon area of Burma. He became a novice at age twelve and ordained at age twenty. After decades of study, he passed the rigorous series of government examinations in the Theravāda Buddhist texts gaining the Dhammācariya (dhamma teacher) degree and abhivamsa (senior teacher) degree.

Sayadaw U Panditābhivamsa began practicing Vipassana meditation under the guidance of the Mahāsi Sayādaw in 1950. In 1955, he left his position as a teacher of scriptural studies to become a meditation teacher at the Mahāsi Meditation Center. Soon after the Mahasi Sayādaw died in 1982, Sayadaw U Panditābhivamsa became the guiding teacher (Ovādacariya) of the Mahāsi Meditation Center. In 1991, he left that position and founded Panditārāma

Meditation Center in Yangon. Now, many Panditārāma branch centers have been established in Burma, Nepal, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Sayadaw U Panditābhivamsa became well-known in the West after conducting a retreat in the spring of 1984 at the Insight Meditation Society (IMS) in Barre, Massachusetts, in the United States. Many of the senior western meditation teachers in the Mahāsi tradition practiced with Sayadaw U Panditābhivamsa at that and subsequent retreats. The talks he gave in 1984 at IMS were compiled in the book "In This Very Life."

Sayadaw U Panditābhivamsa has also been the guiding teacher of Tathagata Meditation Center (TMC), San Jose, California, USA since it was founded in 1991, where he attends and teaches Vipassana meditation almost every spring.

## Preface

This book, ‘Spiritual Cultivation’, is the compilation of the Dhamma talks I gave during the spring meditation retreat from May 5 to June 13, 2007, at the Tathagata Meditation Center (TMC), San Jose, California, USA. They are great gifts from the Buddha which I want to share.

Under the guidance of Late Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw and according to the authentic teaching of the Buddha, I have given talks on Vipassana meditation for more than four decades. In my talks given at TMC in 2007, I put emphasis on the spiritual cultivation according to the teaching of the Buddha. I explained that we can be happy only when we reduce or remove our greed, hatred, and ignorance. Otherwise, the insatiable desire for more (*mahiccha*), better, and different (*atriccha*) will make us sinfully selfish (*pāpicchā*). As a result, crimes will never decrease in our society, wars will never end on our planet, and suffering will never cease in our life. That is why the Pali text says thus: “All kinds of suffering that a living being comes across are rooted in the mental defilements, (*sakalam-idam sattānam dukkham kilesa-mūlakam*)”

We need to build up a civilized society where we can live in peace and harmony. For that purpose, I explained about deeds of generosity (*dāna*) that involve loving kindness, compassion, wisdom and morality (*sīla*) that prevent us from wrong doings and protect others from being hurt. More importantly, I explained how to practice vipassana meditation

(*bhāvanā*) to overcome mental defilements that cause horrible suffering now and in the future (*kilesāmete pavatti-dukkhā, āyatim ca dukkha-hetu-bhūtā*). With Vipassana insights and ultimate enlightenment gained from the Vipassana practice, we will surely obtain real happiness.

I would like to thank the Tathagata Meditation Center (TMC) for making this book possible to benefit yogis, Buddhist devotees and those who are interested in spiritual cultivation. And, importantly, I would like to express my deepest appreciation of their time and energy devoted to Buddha's sasana over the years.

May you be well and happy under the protection of Triple Gem.

U Panditābhivamsa

# Spiritual Cultivation

## Introduction

Today is Saturday May 5, 2007. We are going to start a 44-day meditation retreat at this Tathagata Meditation Center, San Jose, California, USA. Starting today, I am going to give you a gift of Dhamma at 5 pm every day. I am very glad to get this opportunity to teach you how to make great use of the Dhamma gift given by the Buddha. I do hope you will cherish this Dhamma gift.

The ordinary kinds of gift tend to get dirty or moldy after some time. Normally, the longer you use them, the more they get worn out and deteriorate. As for the Dhamma gift, however, it will become even better and brighter every time you used. The more you use it, the more shining it will become and the more benefits it will bring to you.

In our Buddhist society, there is a saying: "*The true culture is the true essence of a human being.*" If you can cultivate the true culture, you will gain the true essence of human life or true quality of life. But, what is true culture and what is false culture?

The "true culture" can be interpreted in different ways in different communities in the world. In the Dhamma field, *the true culture means the self-restraint that protects oneself and others from dangers.* The self-restraint means refraining from doing wrong. Therefore, the true culture is to have control over oneself in such a way that one will not be hurting

others. One has to refrain from all sorts of misconducts bodily, verbally or mentally, which are disgusting. Buddha taught us to have moral shame and moral fear from these misconducts. If we can refrain from these misconducts, our bodily behavior, speech, and mind will become pure, clean, cultured, gentle, and lovable. So, having self-control is beneficial to both oneself and others. That is why self-restraint is the true essence of a human or the true quality of life. It is necessary for all people, irrespective of their nationality and religion.

Everyone has mental impurities. For example, you want your family and relatives to be well and happy. That can be related to loving kindness or to attachment. If it hurts nobody, then it cannot be said to be bad. Nobody will take it as a sin or an offense. But, if you are very selfish, you only think of your own benefit, your own family and relatives, your own country or nation, then it is an extreme form of attachment or selfishness (*lobha*). If you entertain such an extreme form of attachment or selfishness, you are likely to end up transgressing and committing misconducts that can hurt both yourself and others. Without self-restraint, it is very difficult to build up a civilized human society. Having no self-restraint, people will get indulged in misconducts, such as taking other's belongings by force or unlawfully, committing sexual misconduct, telling lies in order to have personal gain or fame, and so on. In such an uncivilized world, it is difficult to find true culture.

It is said that, if one is free from enemies, one will also be free from danger. It implies that, if one is not free from enemies, one will not be free from danger. There are two kinds of enemies, internal and external. Internal enemy is mental defilements and external enemy is things or beings that are dangerous to us. We face external enemies only from

time to time, but internal enemies all the time.

Mental defilements, such as greed, selfishness, anger, hatred, etc., are internal enemies. Entertaining these internal enemies, we can meet frightening dangers, such as a guilty conscience or being blamed by oneself (*attānurvāda-bhaya*); being blamed by others, especially by wise people (*parānurvāda-bhaya*); getting punished by authority or by law (*danda-bhaya*); and finally getting reborn in woeful existences as a result of misconducts (*duggati-bhaya*). These are dangers into which we would be pushed down by the internal enemies; i.e., mental defilements. Therefore, it is logical that, if we want to be peaceful and freed from such dangers as external enemies, we should be free from internal enemies, since they are related as cause and effect.

If you have an extreme form of greed (*lobha*), you may take other people's belongings that are not given, you may have sexual misconduct, or commit adultery. After having committed such things, you may feel as if your wish was fulfilled or as if it were a kind of achievement. But, actually, your internal enemies defeated you. You will suffer painful consequences of extreme forms of mental defilements and cannot live in peace.

If you only care about the well-being of yourself and your family but not others as their families and their nations, then you have no loving kindness nor compassion. You become selfish, aggressive, and cruel to others. Lack of loving kindness leads to hatred. Lack of compassion results in cruelty, along with envy, ill-will, and jealousy. Then you will commit misconducts such as hurting yourself and others. This is by no means regarded as true culture. On the other hand, if you have self-restraint along with loving kindness and compassion, you will not commit misconducts to hurt yourself and others; you will protect others from being hurt;

you care about others' welfares; and you have patience and forgiveness to others. This is the true culture or the true essence of a human.

Having loving kindness and compassion and being free from anger and hatred, you are regarded as having a great victory over yourself. At the same time, you will develop wisdom and overcome an extreme form of foolishness and stupidity. It is with wisdom that you know what is beneficial, what is harmful, what is suitable, and what is not suitable. Such wisdom will help you to refrain from misconducts and to perform good deeds.

So, by exerting effort and wisdom, you can create an opportunity to build up true culture, the true essence of a human. Buddha taught more than two thousand five hundred years ago how to abandon misconduct and how to cultivate good conduct and good culture. According to the teachings, the true culture is self-restraint or, in other words, the purification of our mind from mental defilements, such as greed, anger, hatred, jealousy, and so on.

Satipathāna meditation is the greatest Dhamma gift given by the Buddha and it is the certain way to purify our minds of the mental defilements. Now, we have 44 days to make use of this Dhamma gift. I guarantee that, if you seriously practice this Satipathāna meditation during this retreat, you will gain the true culture.



# Deeds of Generosity

## (*Dāna*)

I have mentioned an old saying: “The true culture is the human’s true essence.” There are different kinds of culture in different countries and nationalities. One should understand distinctly between what is true culture and what is false culture. I have explained that true culture belongs to self-control that is to refrain from harming others or from causing mental or physical suffering to others. I would like to explain more about that from both theoretical and practical aspects.

The opposite of culture is rudeness. Where there is culture, there is no rudeness. Where there is rudeness, there is no culture. Rudeness refers to a blameworthy body, speech and mindset. If one's bodily or verbal actions or mindsets are blameworthy, one is regarded as being rude. Such a rude person will get indulged in actions of violence and harm to others. He is also burning himself and others with his internal fires of greed, hatred, anger, delusion, and so on. With such bad behaviors, he will go against the true culture. So, the true culture means to be morally blameless, pure, clean, gentle, civilized, peaceful and lovable in body, speech, and mind.

In the ultimate sense, rudeness means extreme forms of selfishness (*rāga*), hatred (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*). There are three forms of mental defilements. The first one is the transgressive form that manifests in body and speech. The second is mentally active. The third is dormant. Any of these forms is regarded as rude, unpleasant, disgusting, and horrifying. It is very important to have moral shame and

moral fear of them so that they will get weaker and weaker; and then one's body, speech, and mind will become purer, more civilized, and more loveable. In this way, one can replace rudeness with culture.

There are three ways to remove the rudeness. The first one is deeds of generosity (*dāna*); i.e., offering, giving, sharing, or providing others with what they need without expecting personal gain or fame. The second one is to refrain from misconducts or morality (*sīla*). And the third one is mental development practice (*bhāvana*) that can reduce or remove mental impurities. Among these three ways, Buddha taught the easiest one first, that is *dāna*.

*Dāna* means to share your possessions or belongings with others. When doing *dāna*, you have to give up the attachment to your belongings. Thus, *dāna* frees you from the attachment. If you are selfish, you will use your possessions for your own sake without sharing them with others. If you want to share your belongings with others, you have to remove or reduce the extreme form of selfishness and attachment to your belongings (*lobha*) and develop nongreed or unselfishness (*alobha*). In this way, your mind will become pure, gentle, and lovable, to some extent. This is how you can develop culture by performing *dāna*.

At the time of doing *dāna*, one's mind is pure and clean and so are one's bodily and verbal behaviors. *Dāna* is called *puñña* (merit), which is defined thus: "It is called *puñña* as it purifies one's life" (*attano santānam punātīti puññam*). For the same reason, *dāna* is called *kiriya* in Pali, meaning something that should be done. Moreover, *dāna* is also called *vatthu*, because the volition, the leading factor of *dāna*, is the cause of happiness and wealth. Thus, *dāna* is called *puñña-kiriya-vatthu*. You can see how beautiful the merit of *dāna* is.

The *dāna* done without expecting personal gain or fame is pure and clean. Such pure *dāna* can help one fulfill one's wishes. In this sense *puñña* is defined further; thus: "The merit is called *puñña*, as it helps fulfill wishes of the merit-doer (*kāraṅkaṣṣa manoratham pūretīti puññaṃ*).” You do not need to make wishes in particular, but *dāna* will fulfill your wishes in nature.

Buddha taught *dhamma* and *vinaya*. *Dhamma* is the guidance that guarantees the dhamma-follower happiness. *Vinaya* are rules or disciplines that purify or beautify one's physical and verbal behaviors. These *dhamma* and *vinaya* are also called *sāsana*, which means culture, or the way for one to be cultured. Whose culture is it? It is Buddha's culture because Buddha teaches it. *Dāna* is basic Buddhist culture, or the beginning of the culture compared to the two higher ones (morality and mental development).

We can understand how fundamental the Buddha's teaching is. The volition that generates *dāna* (*cetana*) plays the most important role in fulfilling the wishes of *dāna*-doers. It is not creator, but one's own volition, which can fulfill one's wishes. By performing *dāna*, one is said to be removing greed-led unwholesome mental states and to be developing nongreed-led wholesome mental states instead. How? When one does *dāna*, small or big, one has kind intention to make others well and happy. Such kind intention is loving kindness (*metta*) that removes anger or hatred (*dosa*). Thus, one develops non-hatred (*adosa*) which manifests as patience, forgiveness and unselfishness when associating or dealing with others. Therefore, by performing *dāna*, one develops loving kindness instead of hatred and compassion in place of cruelty.

The wise cherishes pure *dāna* done with loving kindness (*mettā*) and compassion (*karunā*) without expecting personal

gain or fame. If you do not share your belongings with others, then you are regarded as being selfish. To share your belongings with others, you need to have loving kindness (*metta*) and compassion (*karunā*) for others. And also the deed of *dāna* requires wisdom (*paññā*) in terms of understanding that the pure *dāna* will bring good results. In this way, by performing pure *dāna*, you develop loving kindness (*metta*), compassion (*karunā*), and wisdom (*paññā*).

Besides, one develops sympathetic joy (*mudita*) when one takes delight in the happiness gained by the recipient of one's *dāna*. Then, one overcomes envy, jealousy, and conceit. You do *dāna* with faith or confidence in its benefit. Thus, you remove skeptical doubt. Moreover, *dāna* is done with the right view (*sammāditthi*) that good deeds bring good results and bad deeds bring bad results. In this way, *dāna* helps you to overcome many unwholesome mental factors and to accumulate many beautiful mental states.

When one performs *dāna*, one should aim at the welfare of others without expecting personal fame or gain. However, one has to expect for the spiritually worthwhile gain for oneself when one does any kind of meritorious deed such as *dāna*. This can help remove or reduce extreme forms of mental defilements to some extent and develop beautiful mental states of loving kindness, compassion, wisdom, patience, and forgiveness. In addition, if performed correctly, *dāna* can open "Moral Road," leading to higher kinds of culture. Without them, one is still liable to commit misconducts generated by extreme form of mental defilements.

**Asoka's Inscription:** One of the King Asoka's inscriptions says that, although *dāna* is a minor kind of wholesome deed among others, if one manages to perform it in a correct way, it can help overcome extreme form of mental defilements. Such noble *dāna* uplifts the quality of

life, being free from the gravity of the defilements. Thus, it can also open the moral path.

Now I will explain how *dāna* contributes to the higher kind of culture that is morality (*sīla*) in accordance with the teachings of the Buddha.

**Requirements for *dāna*:** *Dāna* is generally translated as offering, giving or sharing, but it has three literal meanings: something to be offered (*dātābavattthu*); one's volition to offer, which is the cause of offering (*cetanā*); and the act of offering. There are requirements for *dāna* to take place: material things to be offered, volition to offer, nonattachment to one's belongings, compassion, and loving kindness to the recipient. Being short of any requirement, *dāna* cannot take place. Basically, if you are unselfish and kind to others, the volition to offer (*cetanā*) naturally follows and you can perform *dāna* easily.

Based on anger and hatred (*dosa*), one tends to commit cruel actions; whereas, by performing *dāna*, one naturally develops loving kindness, compassion, and sympathetic joy. Being kind and compassionate, one will not commit evil or cruel actions, such as harming or killing others, taking other peoples' belongings by force or in any unlawful way, committing adultery or sexual misconduct, telling a lie and taking intoxicants. In this way, by performing *dāna* systematically, one can open moral path. Thus, one can easily go on to practice morality (*sīla*).

As I explained earlier, one of the meanings of *dāna* is things to offer (*dātābavattthu*). Most people think that something to offer means only material things. Actually, there are two other kinds to offer, such as safety or protection and the method of practice that can uplift the quality of life. In this sense, there are three kinds of *dāna*: offering material

things (*āmisā-dāna*), offering safety or protection (*abhaya-dāna*), and offering the method of practice that can the uplift quality of life (*dhamma-dāna*).

**Āmisā-dāna:** The first one, *āmisā-dāna*, can be done by offering material things with good intention. I do not need to explain it in detail, because most of you have learned a lot about it.

**Abhaya-dāna:** The second one, *abhaya-dāna*, means offering safety. One can offer safety to others by protecting others from dangers. Usually people are afraid of bad dictators, bad government, thieves, robbers, insurgents or rebels, fire, enemies, wild animals, poisonous snakes, and so on. They are even afraid of ghosts and spirits that cannot be seen. If one protects others from such dangers, one is said to be offering safety (*abhaya-dāna*).

This *abhaya-dāna* can be done in many different ways, such as to help people to have good governments if theirs is bad, to protect others from robbery or theft, to prevent fire from breaking out or to help put out the fire if it breaks out, to prevent floods or to help flood victims, to protect others from enemies and wild animals, and so on.

Having anger and hatred (*dosa*), people are liable to commit misconducts such as tormenting, hurting, harming, and killing others. If one controls one's *dosa*, then others will not get hurt or harmed. So, by controlling one's own *dosa*, one is said to protect others from being hurt and to offer safety. People are naturally afraid of being harmed, of being fooled or cheated, of being robbed of their wealth, and of being harassed by intoxicants. If one can refrain from such immoral actions through the self-control, one is regarded as protecting others from dangers and offering safety. This kind of offering excels so many times the offering of material

things (*āmisā-dāna*). One, therefore, should give priority to offering safety to others (*abhaya-dāna*).

**Dhamma-dāna:** The third kind of *dāna* is *dhamma-dāna*. Here *Dhamma* means guidance that can uplift the quality of life. If one practices the dhamma, one's bodily action, speech and mindset will be pure and clean. *Dhamma-dāna* is to give the method of how to refrain from bad behaviors or how to reduce or remove mental impurities. The practice of *Satipatthāna* meditation can bring seven benefits, such as purification of the mind and so on. Therefore, it is *dhamma-dāna*, since it gives instruction or guidance to others on how to practice the dhamma so that they can enjoy its seven benefits. Now, here in this meditation center, the volunteers are helping yogis with food and lodging so that yogis can practice well. In a sense, they are also regarded as performing *dhamma-dāna*.

# Morality

## (*Sīla*)

What I have explained about three kinds of *dāna*, including offering material things (*āmisa-dāna*), offering safety (*abhaya-dāna*) and offering dhamma (*dhamma-dāna*), is not my own opinion but what the Buddha taught. If you can learn the Buddha's teaching directly from the text, your faith and confidence will become steadfast. In addition, with knowledge gained from practice your faith and confidence will become unwavering.

Regarding *abhaya-dāna* explained earlier, the Pāli text says: "When danger arises from a hostile person, protecting people from that danger is known as *abhaya-dāna* (*veripuggalato sattānam bhaye paccupatthite, tato parittāna-bhāvena veditabbam.*)" So, it is *abhaya-dāna* to protect people from being harmed by enemies. Hence, *abhaya-dāna* belongs to *sīla* or morality.

**Two Kinds of Enemy:** There are two kinds of enemy, internal and external. The internal one is called *akusala-vera* or *kilesa-vera*, the enemy in the form of unwholesomeness or mental defilements. The second one is *puggala-vera*, enemy in the form of person. The internal enemies, (i.e. mental defilements) are more horrible than the external one, because they are wholly responsible for all kinds of suffering. So, if you are afraid of suffering or if you want to be well and happy, you should defeat the internal enemies mercilessly.

Now I would like to expound the '*Vera Sutta*' (the discourse on enemy) from Anguttara Nikāya, Pañcaka Nipāta.



In the Suttanta, Buddha mentioned five kinds of fearful enemies (*bhaya-vera*): killing, stealing, sexual misconduct or adultery, lying, and taking intoxicating drinks and drugs. The Buddha said that, if one fails to refrain from these five kinds of *bhaya-vera*, one cannot be virtuous; whereas, if one refrains from them, one will become virtuous. This *sutta* is noteworthy for everyone, regardless of nationality, race, or religion.

*Bhaya* literally means fear or dread. Sometimes, fear takes place as a result of wisdom. For example, if you see the defects in life, you would become fearful. This kind of fear belongs to the wisdom called sense of urgency (*samvega*) or knowledge associated with moral fear (*sahotappa-ñāna*). Another kind of *bhaya* means fearsome objects or dangers such as bad government or bad dictators or any other kinds of terrifying objects (*ārammana-bhaya*). The third kind is fearful mental state (*cittutrāsa-bhaya*) associated with passive anger (unwholesomeness).

*Vera* literally means enemy or enmity. As mentioned earlier, they are of two kinds. The first one is unwholesomeness, or mental defilements (*akusalavera*), which is also called “internal enemy” or “near enemy.” The second kind is personal enemy or enmity (*puggala-vera*), that is also called “external enemy” or “distant enemy.”

You should practice mindfulness meditation so that you can remove or reduce mental defilements. Having no mindfulness, you will always fall victim to the defilements such as greed, wrong view, and so on.

People with wrong views believe that each and every being is constituted of a soul that can be big or small according to the size of a being, and possesses sense faculties such as seeing, hearing, and so on. Such an individual soul (*jīva-*

*atta*) is believed to last forever and to move on to a new body in a new life after one's death. People also believe that there exists the supreme soul or God (*parama-atta*) who governs and controls the whole universe, including the individual souls of all beings. This supreme soul is described as the "absolute" that is never happy or sad, with no exact form or shape. This wrong view is also one of the internal enemies.

Other internal enemies are: anger, hatred, lust, delusion, skeptical doubt, regret and so on. These mental defilements called *vera* are more horrible than the personal enemy, because they are wholly responsible for killing, stealing, committing sexual misconduct, lying, and taking intoxicants. If you commit such immoral deeds, you are regarded as your own enemy.

Those who torture or kill others obviously have no loving-kindness, compassion, patience, and forgiveness. They never think of others' welfare. Their mind is unwholesome. Suppose, if in one second, one unwholesome mind takes place, then there would be sixty unwholesome minds in one minute, and three hundred in five minutes, and thirty-six hundred in one hour. Thus, the more the unwholesome minds take place, the more the enemies occur to you. Doing such unwholesome things, one seems to be brave but actually is always fearful of getting blamed or punished by law and of being reborn in lower existences. In this way, failing to refrain from five kinds of misconduct, one will end up living in fear (*cittruttāsa-bhaya*).

As explained repeatedly, failure to refrain from five kinds of misconduct leads to enmity and dangers. Committing misconducts you will hurt others and in return, others will bear a grudge against you and take their revenge on you when they get a chance. In this way, personal enmity (*puggalavera*) will build up.

The internal enemy in terms of unwholesomeness always leads to the personal enemy. Nowadays there are disputes and fights among people, groups or countries. Although some may surrender, they would build up personal enmity. In any case, the internal enemy (i.e. mental defilements) will bring about even more horrible enmity, not only in this present life but also in future existences because they are the main sources of five evil deeds, such as killing, stealing, etc. Among them, intoxicants seem harmless but can result in negligence or failure to perform wholesome deeds and to refrain from unwholesome deeds. You will have to face dangers if you fail to refrain from evil deeds, whereas you will lose benefits if you fail to perform good deeds. Taking intoxicants can ruin your marriage, business, job, reputation, and social life. In this way, taking intoxicants will bring you danger and fear.

Therefore, a transgressive form of mental defilements such as killing, stealing, etc., is harmful to yourself and others physically and mentally. By controlling yourself, you can protect others from being hurt. If you are considerate and compassionate to others, you can automatically control yourself. So, the observance of the five precepts is the discipline for everyone to follow, regardless of race, nationality, or religion. This uplifts the quality of life. This is something to measure human status with. This makes you a high-class person. Like the blood group "O" which is suitable to any blood group for transfusing, the observance of five precepts is suitable to everyone on earth.

So, there are two kinds of enemy: mental defilements and brutal people. The first one is internal enemy and the second is external. The internal enemy is more frightening than the external. But people give priority to protection from external enemy, rather than the internal enemy.

**Kilesa Fire:** Indulging in the extreme form of greed, anger and delusion, you will end up committing misconducts, such as killing, stealing, lying, taking intoxicants, and so on. Such evil mental states are one's internal enemy. If you cannot control them, they will bring you many personal enemies. An immoral person (*dussila*) could not find happiness in life. *Pali* text says that a hundred percent of sufferings are caused by mental defilements (*kilesa*). And these *kilesa* are burning people just like fire. The more the *kilesa*, the more the suffering; the less the *kilesa*, the less the suffering; no *kilesa*, no suffering, of course. People suffer when they do not get what they want. If they seek what they want in whatever way available, they would end up doing misconducts causing even more sufferings.

**Unwholesome Results:** As a result of misconducts, you would suffer guilty conscience (*attānuvāda-bhaya*), fear that others would blame you when they detect your misdeeds (*parānuvāda-bhaya*), and suffer punishment imposed by law (*danda-bhaya*). These are the bad consequences that can happen in the present life. More horrible is that these misconducts will lead you to the woeful rebirths (*duggati-bhaya*). Actually, nobody likes sufferings and everybody likes happiness. If you want yourself and others to be happy, you need to abandon and remove the mental defilements which underlie all sorts of misconducts.

**Three Forms of Kilesa:** There are three forms of mental defilements (*kilesa*): transgressive form (*vitekama kilesa*) that manifests in body and speech, active form (*pariyuthāna kilesa*) that manifests in the mind, and dormant form (*anusaya kilesa*) that would manifest when conditions are met. Just as you avoid a place where contagious disease are breaking out, so also you must avoid and prevent mental defilements from arising. The Buddha recommended the

practice of mindfulness as the best way to remove the mental defilements or to prevent them from arising or leading to transgression. Before mindfulness is mature, they may arise from time to time. Then, one should get rid of them right away by noting them concurrently, just like curing an illness as soon as possible. Anyway, prevention is better than cure. By practicing the mindfulness meditation you can develop insight knowledge stage by stage until the attainment of *magga-phala* enlightenment, which can uproot the dormant form of the defilements.

In order to cure the three forms of mental defilements, the Buddha prescribed three kinds of training (*sikkhā*): morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*). By observing the five precepts, you can restrain the transgressive form of defilement so that you can overcome danger and enmity. Danger and enemy (*bhaya, vera*) actually mean the mental defilements that underlie such misconducts as killing, stealing, committing sexual misconducts, lying, and using intoxicating drinks and drugs. Actually, it is the first stage of enlightenment called *sotapati-magga* that can get rid of this transgressive form of defilement. To attain this enlightenment, you have to practice *Satipatthana* meditation, of course, because only supramundane kinds of morality, concentration and wisdom can uproot these defilements.

**Moral Shame and Fear:** These five kinds of misconducts are disgusting and frightening. They can be compared to two iron balls, one is dirty with excrement and another is red hot. You want to touch neither, as one is disgusting and the other frightening. In the same way, you should be ashamed and afraid of doing such misconducts. By cultivating moral shame (*hiri*) and moral fear (*ottappa*), you can refrain from the misconducts.

These two mental states are honored as white *dhamma*

(*sukka-dhamma*), because, having moral shame and moral fear you can refrain from the misconducts and you will become pure. Just as the color white can repel heat, these two *dhamma* repel the heat of misconducts.

They are also called the guardian of universe (*loka-pāla*). Without moral shame and moral fear, people will commit evil deeds, ruin each other, and destroy this world. This world is guarded by the people who have moral shame and moral fear. Therefore, these two are called the guardians of universe.

They are also called shining *dhamma* (*deva-dhamma*). Refraining from misconducts through moral shame and moral fear, you are considered to be a true human and your reputation will be shining. That is why these two are also called “shining phenomena.”

**Wholesomeness (*Kusala*):** At the time of doing a deed of generosity (*dāna*), you overcome the three unwholesome roots. You can give something to somebody only when you wish him or her well-being. So, *dāna* is constituted of loving kindness (*mettā*) and compassion or sympathy (*karunā*). You want other to be well and happy; you do not want them to have physical or mental pain. Therefore, you refrain from killing, stealing, committing sexual misconducts and lying. So, *sīla* involves *metta* and *karuna*, which is also called “gift of safety” (*abhya-dāna*), because it enables you to refrain from hurting others. Thus, having *metta* and *karuna*, you make others safe, well, and happy. As a result, you, yourself, naturally become safe, well, and happy. Both oneself and others get freed from fear, danger (*bhaya*), and enemies (*vera*) in this life and lives after death. This is wholesomeness (*kusala*), which is characterized as flawlessness and pleasant result (*kusalā anavajja-sukhavipāka-lakkhanā*). This is Buddhist culture.

Again, the first two kinds of offering (*dāna*) are: offering material things (*āmisā-dāna*) and offering safety (*abhaya-dāna*). Most people are just satisfied with the first kind of *dāna*, offering others what they need. Very few can appreciate the second kind of *dāna*, which offers protection and safety to others. Actually, *sīla* is even more satisfying. Yogis who are here not only observe five precepts but also eight precepts. So, you are practicing the Buddhist culture and have a good beginning. However, you still need to practice further until you can uproot all the mental defilements. Thus, the good beginning can lead to a good successful end.

**Classifications of Sīla:** Now, I would like to explain types of *sīla* in terms of quality. Visudhimagga classifies *sīla* into three types depending on “the Four Bases or Factors of Accomplishments” (*iddhi-pāda*): ambition (*chandā-dhipati*), moral courage (*vīriyā-dhipati*), willpower (*cittā-dhipati*), and reasoning power (*vīmaṃsā-dhipati*). The *sīla* observed with these factors of poor quality is regarded as “low class morality” (*hīna-sīla*); the one with factors of moderate quality is “medium class morality” (*majjhima-sīla*); and the one with the best quality factors is “high class morality” (*pañña-sīla*).

*Sīla* is also classified according to what purpose you have to observe it. It is low-class *sīla* (*hīna-sīla*) if it is observed for personal fame or gain; middle-class *sīla* (*majjhima-sīla*) if observed with expectation for its benefits; high-class *sīla* (*pañña-sīla*) if observed with appreciation of its value that *sīla* is something worthy to observe, because it helps purify one’s bodily and verbal behaviors.

It is also classified depending on whether one takes pride in one’s *sīla*. It is a low-class morality (*hīna-sīla*) if you take so much pride in your *sīla* thinking that it is only you who can observe morality. It is middle-class *sīla* (*majjhima-sīla*) if

you observe it without taking too much pride in it or without looking down others. It is a high-class *sīla* (*pañīta-sīla*) if it is totally free of defilements.

It is also classified according to one's aim. It is low-class *sīla* (*hīna-sīla*) if you observe it with the aim to gain the higher social status; middle-class *sīla* (*majjhima-sīla*) if you observe it to liberate yourself out of the cycle of rebirth (*samsāra*). When you present precepts to the monk, you say, "*idam me sīlam magga-phala-ñānassa paccayo hotu,*" meaning "May my *sīla* contribute to path and fruition knowledge." So your *sīla* is considered to be *majjhima-sīla*, because it is observed in order to free yourself from the round of existences. It is high-class *sīla* (*pañīta-sīla*) if you observe it with purpose to help all beings liberate from *samsāra* by fulfilling perfection (*pāramī*).

**Pāramī:** Whenever you perform merit or wholesome deeds, you should not expect personal gain or fame, but for the welfare and benefits of others. You should not wish for a minor kind of pleasure that has no guarantee but the ultimate peacefulness of *Nibbana*. High-class *sīla* can constitute *paramī*, which literally means "noble work." One who performs wholesome deeds, such as *dāna* and *sīla*, aiming at the benefits of others is considered as "*parama*" (a noble person), and his or her wholesome deeds are "*pāramī*" (noble works). Deeds done expecting personal gain or fame are not considered as *pāramī*.

**Dāna and Sīla:** The text says that *dāna* can be done more easily than *sīla*. However, if you can perform such high-class *dāna*, you will find yourself good enough to practice morality, because *dāna* helps you to reduce selfishness, hatred, and delusion. That is why the Buddha continues to talk about *sīla* after *dāna*. Moreover, *dāna* becomes even more beneficial for both donor and recipient if they observe pure morality.



*Dāna* is taught to indicate what should be done, whereas *sīla* is to show what should be refrained. *Dāna* results in material prosperity and *sīla* guarantees higher rebirth.

As a human being in this world, you have social responsibilities for your family, relatives, friends, nation, and so on. In other word, you are responsible to protect others from being harmed or hurt to the very best you can. So, you should refrain from misconduct, cruelty and violence. You should have vigilance (*appamada*) to do what you should do so that you can enjoy full benefits and avoid what you should avoid so that you can be free from harm and danger.

**Give and Take:** There is a paradoxical couple of words in the text: *paricāga* (to give) and *pariggaha* (to take). They are different in words but the same in essence. Suppose, for example, you offer something to someone, or you pay respect to someone, or you give safety to somebody with loving kindness and compassion, especially to the person who has virtue of morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*). Such deeds of giving (*paricāga*) will bring you great amount of benefits (*pariggaha*). In this sense, to give means to take.

**Four Kinds of Blessings:** In life, there are four kinds of blessings: wealth, high social status, happiness, and a tranquil mind that is not agitated with selfishness, hatred, and delusion. These four are interrelated. If you are wealthy, you can help others or you can get more chance to perform meritorious deeds. Thus, you can gain higher social status and happiness. And you can also gain more chance to practice mindfulness that can keep your mind calm and tranquil.

Without mindfulness, your mind will be agitated with greed or lust when it encounters desirable objects; with dissatisfaction, anger or grudge when it comes across

undesirable objects; and with confusion or delusion when it does not know the truth. If these negative mental states develop, you will be in total chaos like a ball rolling down a hill without any control. On the other hand, by knowing the truth, your mind will become matured. Your spiritual stamina will develop against the ups and downs of life. Whatever you come across, whether good or bad, desirable or undesirable, the mind will be stable, calm, and peaceful. Such a stable and peaceful mind is the greatest blessing in life.

**The Results of Dāna and Sīla:** *Dāna* alone cannot help purify your bodily and verbal conducts. So, it is necessary to observe *sīla* for this purpose. Thanks to *sīla*, you can be reborn in what is called “*saga*”, the realms where there are abundant sensual objects. In the human and *deva* realms, there are abundant sensual objects, such as beautiful sights to see, sweet sounds to hear, tasty foods to eat, and pleasant touches to enjoy (especially the touch between the opposite sexes, which is the most desirable for majority of people). To be reborn in such pleasurable realms, you have to practice *sīla*. Of course, it is *dāna* that provides you with such sensual objects in those realms. So, while *sīla* leads you to the wholesome rebirth, such as human and *deva*, *dāna* gives you the opportunity to enjoy such sensual objects. These are the results of *dāna* and *sīla*.

America, for example, is very advanced in technology and science. There are so many things to enjoy. America is considered a place where people live with good deeds done in their past lives, in addition to diligence and knowledge in the present lives. They can get almost everything at the push of a button. As a result of *dāna* and *sīla*, you were reborn in such a rich country. In contrast, the Buddha also talked about the flaws of human and *deva* lives. Buddha showed

*deva* and human lives as the benefits of *dāna* and *sīla* and at the same time, described the flaws of these very existences, just like an elephant that is adorned first before its trunk gets cut later.

If you spend your life just enjoying sensual pleasure, you cannot be happy forever. You should not think that these sensual pleasures are the best. These sensual pleasures are enjoyable, but they are impermanent and have no guarantee. Your insatiable desire for better and newer sensual objects will bring you suffering sooner or later. That is why the Buddha described this kind of sensual life as a bit pleasurable (*appa-ssāda*), very miserable (*bahu-dukkha*), very stressful (*bahu-pāyāsa*) and very inferior and impure (*sādīnava*). In this sense, the Buddha, out of compassion, gave the discourse on the journey to reliable happiness (*Maggagata Sutta*).

# Mental Development Practice

(*Bhāvanā*)

There are two kinds of pleasure. The first one has three names, such as sensual pleasure (*kāma-sukha*), filthy pleasure (*mīla-sukha*), and ignoble pleasure (*anariya-sukha*). The second kind of pleasure can be gained when you can renounce sensual objects (*vatthu-kāma*) and sensual desire (*kilesā-kāma*). You come for the meditation retreat leaving sensual objects behind and practice mindfulness to keep your mind away from sensual desire. In this sense, you can taste the second kind of happiness to some extent.

At a certain level of *vipassana* insight, such as insight about the appearing and disappearing of the phenomena (*udiyabbaya-ñāna*), you will experience the unique kind of happiness. At higher levels of insight, there will be calmness and tranquility. When you attain *magga-phala* enlightenments, you will experience the ultimate peacefulness of *nibbana*. Then, you can completely renounce sensual objects and sensual desire. Thus, the superior kind of pleasure takes place under several names, such as pleasure of renunciation (*nekkhamma-sukha*), pleasure of seclusion (*pavivekasukha*), pleasure of tranquility (*upasamasukha*), and the pleasure of enlightenment (*sambodha-sukha*). So you have to sacrifice the first kind of pleasure for the attainment of this superior happiness. It is really encouraging that you are on the path to such genuine happiness.

Unless you see the flaws of the sensual pleasure, it is impossible to renounce them. Therefore, the Buddha showed

the flaws of sensual pleasure, and at the same time, the flawless happiness of renunciation, so that you can have the sense of spiritual urgency (*samvega-ñāna*). As a result, your faith and confidence become strong enough to put effort in the intensive practice of *vipassana* meditation.

As previously mentioned, “*nekkhamma*” literally means renunciation of sensual pleasure. According to the text, it refers to the ordination of a monk or a nun, the first *samathajhāna*, *vipassana* insight knowledge, or the attainment of ultimate peacefulness of *nibbana*. Understanding distinctly between mind and matter, understanding of impermanence, suffering, and nonself are stages of insight knowledge that are also renunciations, because such *vipassana* mental states are free from sensual desire. The pleasure or happiness that arises from such renunciation is called pleasure of renunciation (*nekkhamma-sukha*). This kind of happiness is pure of the flaws, such as attachment (*raga*), aversion (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*).

You live in the realm of sensual pleasure (*kāma-bhūmi*). Whether you like it or not, you are burned by fire of mental defilements such as greed, anger, tension, stress, and depression, etc. This kind of fire cannot be seen, as it is internal. You will get burned by the fire of craving when you encounter a desirable object or by the fire of anger, hatred, or dissatisfaction when you come across undesirable objects. You cannot see the flames of such fire. It does not leave charcoal either. That is why it is difficult to extinguish it. If you do not take necessary action to extinguish this internal fire, it will involve you in all sorts of misconduct.

Suppose, if you cannot extinguish a fire, then you just try to escape from it and rush to a safe and peaceful place. In the same way, you have to leave the sensual pleasure behind and go to a safe place (*assama*). Here, *assama* refers to a

meditation center where you extinguish the internal fires of attachment (*raga*), aversion (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*) in a very urgent way. Now, you are here in this center, a safe and peaceful place. Whether you come to this *assama* as a monk, nun or lay yogi, if you practice diligently to extinguish the internal fires of attachment (*raga*), aversion (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*), you are bound to gain pleasure of renunciation (*nekamma-sukha*). You can be considered as an ascetic (*pabbaja*).

‘*Pabbaja*’ (an ascetic) literally means a person who gives up all the worldly affairs and approaches to a quiet place like a meditation center (*assama*) where he or she extinguishes the internal fires. Why do you need to extinguish these fires? It is because they are the root cause of one hundred percent of suffering. By practicing the three trainings of morality (*sila*), concentration (*samadhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*), you can overcome the three levels of mental defilements of transgressive form (*vītekama kilesa*) that manifests in body and speech, active form (*pariyuthāna kilesa*) that manifests in the mind, and dormant form (*anusaya kilesa*) that would manifest when conditions are met, respectively. So, it is not enough just to wear a robe and bear the appearance of a monk, nun or a yogi; you have to work hard. Only through *vipassana* insights and *magga-phala* enlightenment can you uproot all sorts of defilements. For that purpose, you have to practice *vipassana* with three stages of energy: launching energy, sustained energy, and culminating energy. Without these kinds of energy, you would be regarded as a yogi in name only.

If you are able to note the present prominent objects moment by moment with full attention with such strong energy, there can be no room for thoughts of sensual pleasure or thought of ill-will in your mind. What takes place are

mindfulness and concentration that protect and guard the mind from the mental defilements. These three factors such as effort, mindfulness and concentration are called “concentration-led group” (*samādhi-khandha*). If you can practice with this group one moment, you will be free from the defilements for one moment and can enjoy the happiness of renunciation (*nekkhamma-sukha*) one moment. Of course, the longer you can keep your mind away from those mental defilements, the longer you can enjoy the superior happiness.

On the other hand, leaving the meditation center means going back into the fire which is actually unavoidable. In this case, you need the fireproof and fire mask that refers to meditation practice, because it can protect you from *kilesa fire*. So, by practicing mindfulness meditation, you should put out the fire of mental defilements that can arise from the lack of mindfulness.

Previously, I had explained *puñña-kiriya-vatthu* that consists of three words. Among them “*puñña*” is defined in two ways, such as what purifies one’s mind (*attano satānam punāti sodetīti puññam*) and what fulfills one’s wish (“*kāraṅkaṅka manoratham pūretīti puññam*”). Of course, nothing but wholesome deeds can purify one’s life and fulfill one’s wishes.

Whatever wish one makes, whether it is for human pleasure or divine pleasure, the meritorious deeds can help fulfill it. But most of the people make a wish to enjoy the first kind of pleasure (i.e., sensual pleasure) rather than the second kind. Anyway, meritorious deeds are called *puñña*, as they help fulfill one’s wishes. *Dāna* is one of the *puñña*, which especially makes you wealthy. Another *puñña* is *sīla*, which especially brings you the higher rebirths, such as human or celestial. Superior to these two is the *puñña* of meditation

practice, which can develop one's mind and knowledge. That is why meditation practice is called "superior merit" (*adhikusala*).

**Two Mental Powers:** By practicing meditation, one can strengthen two kinds of mental powers: reasoning power (*patisankhāna-bala*) and developing power (*bhāvanā-bala*). Whatever you do, say, or think of, you should check in advance whether it is beneficial and then suitable or not. You should avoid anything unbeneficial or unsuitable. In the worldly life, one needs to make use of such reasoning power, that is also called the awareness of what to do and what not to do (*pārihāriya-paññā*).

Moreover, in terms of clear comprehension (*sampajañña*), it is also called the clear comprehension of what is beneficial (*sātthaka-sampajañña*) and the clear comprehension of suitability (*sappāya-sampajañña*), respectively. It is also called mature knowledge (*nepakka-paññā*). Through the reasoning power, one's mind can develop from small to big and from immature to mature. That is why it is also called *nepakka-paññā*, mature knowledge, which should be used both in the worldly field and the spiritual field. This mental power can improve with the help of mindfulness meditation, which can uplift quality of life. Yogis here are endowed with such mental power (*patisankhāna-bala*), because they know that mindfulness meditation is very beneficial and precious. It is really satisfying to them.

The mental power that is developed by practicing mindfulness meditation is called developing power (*bhāvanā-bala*). It can directly contribute to peacefulness, calmness, knowledge of the truth, and destruction of the wrong views. In order to gain it, one should practice meditation with great effort. Everyone should develop his or her mind systematically. Otherwise, the mind will remain



inferior, weak and tender, no matter how old in age one may be, 25, 50, 70, 80, or older than that. Naturally, the weak is defeated by the strong, a young and tender fruit is easily destroyed by heat or cold. In the same way, a weak and tender mind cannot resist any temptation. It will react badly and stupidly. When one comes across desirable objects, one will have lust and greed, whereas undesirable objects bring about anger and hatred. Therefore, one needs to practice mindfulness meditation so that the mind will become mature with comprehension of the truth.

If one lacks spiritual strength to defend oneself or to repel mental defilements, one will easily fall victim to the tension, stress, and depression. Just as vitamins and minerals are required for the healthy and strong body, so are also spiritual vitamins and minerals needed for the strong and healthy mind.

**Internal Fires:** Without mindfulness, your mind will get out of control and you may happen to do or think of evil things. Naturally, the mind always enjoys sensual objects, such as beautiful sights, sweet sounds, tasty food, and so on. The increasing numbers of desirable objects result in the insatiable desire for sensual pleasure. Thus, desire is burning people. On top of that, anger and displeasure are also burning them when they come across undesirable objects. And delusion and ignorance also burn them when they do not see the flaws of the mental defilement. So, it is very important to learn how to put out these fires of mental defilement.

You should be trained to become a skilled fireman or firewoman with a good fire mask, fireproof to deal with the internal fire. The air full of fumes, for example, is very unhealthy and you have to put out the fire immediately. Unless you can do so, you have to escape through the fire exit and

contact the fire department. In the same way, in the worldly life, people are getting burned by mental defilements from unavoidable social affairs. So, in a meditation center like this, you should learn how to prevent such an internal fire from breaking out and how to extinguish it if it breaks out. At the same time you can also learn there how to strengthen the two kinds of mental powers as mentioned earlier.

A skilled firefighter, for example, understands how dangerous the fire is when it is misused. In the same way, you should understand how horribly the internal fire is burning if you do not have mindfulness that can prevent or extinguish it. You need to have faith and confidence (*saddhā*) in the mindfulness practice which can prevent or extinguish the internal fire. Strong will or courage is also another requirement to face this fire. You should develop the mindfulness or spiritual skill from small to big or from young to mature. That is called *bhāvanā*, which is, therefore, defined as thus: “*Bhāvanā* means the development of the merit that is superior to the ordinary kinds of merit, such as deed of generosity and morality (*adhikusalam bhāvetīti bhāvanā*).”

**A Weak or Polluted Mind:** A weak or polluted mind cannot resist the temptation. With such a mind, you cannot be certain what is true, or you cannot have faith and confidence in what is right, or you may fall victim to a wrong belief or blind faith, or you may lose moral courage to avoid what you should avoid and to perform what you should perform. Failing to avoid what should be avoided, you will encounter harm and danger and; failing to perform what should be performed, you will miss the benefits available. You become lazy and idle, losing ability, strength, and power of the mind. Lack of mindfulness allows all the unwholesome states to come in by leaps and bounds. Thus, your mind will be left

unprotected or unguarded or agitated all the time by lust, hatred, and so on.

Many people believe that it is the creator who is creating happiness for beings. Depending and relying on the creator for their happiness, people lose their own ability and knowledge. Without mature knowledge and mental stamina, you will get elated or agitated under the ups and downs of life, such as gain or loss, fame or defame, praise or blame, and pleasure or pain. It is very important to keep your mind in the state of equilibrium under any condition, whether good or bad. *Satipatthāna* meditation can promise such a mental maturity or spiritual equilibrium.

**The Benefits of Mindfulness Meditation:** Buddha gave a guarantee in a very bold way that *Satipatthāna* meditation can surely solve all sorts of problems. So, it is described as a sure way. People or their behaviors are impure with greed or lust (*rāga*), anger or hatred (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*). In order to get purified from those mental impurities, the practice of four foundations of mindfulness is the sure way. When people lose, for example, one of their family member, business or job, they will suffer very severe grief and sorrow. The *mindfulness* meditation guarantees them to get freed from sorrow, grief, lamentation, physical pain, and mental distress. Most importantly, this practice can guarantee you to reduce and remove mental defilements, which are the main cause of suffering throughout the cycle of rebirths (*samsāra*). In order to gain genuine peace and happiness, you should practice this sure way of *Satipatthāna* meditation. When you can appreciate its benefits, such as purification of the mind, your faith and confidence will definitely become strong and steadfast. By practicing with such strong faith and confidence, you can develop mindfulness, concentration and wisdom, in addition to moral shame and moral fear. Then your mind

will become remarkably free from mental defilements. Thus, *Satipatthāna* meditation will bring you spiritual resistance in dealing with mental impurities or defilements.

Apart from Buddha, nobody on earth can reveal this *Satipattahāna* meditation which can guarantee you seven kinds of benefit, such as purification of the mind. Whoever practices this mindfulness with faith and confidence, he or she can get these seven benefits. So yogis here are believed to be practicing with appreciation of the benefits through your own experience. You should cultivate such awakened faith by further practice (i.e., by being mindful of any prominent object), such as rising and falling of the abdomen. You should exert great effort and strong will in this practice, so that you can enjoy genuine and reliable happiness. You should be courageous to face any kind of pain or inconvenience, such as sleepless night, poor food and lodging.

And also you should restrain yourself from looking or listening without mindfulness. You should pay full attention to your practice. As a yogi, you should make great effort to note present prominent objects for mindfulness (*sati*) to be developed. Sustained mindfulness will contribute to the calm and peaceful mind, making it firmly established on the object of meditation. Such concentration is defined as indestructible concentration (*avikkhepo samādhi*). The mind will be calm, stable, and collected on the object without being wavering with mental defilements.

**Progressive Insights:** As a yogi, you should have moral shame and moral fear of missing the meditative object. Thus, you are developing mental powers, such as effort, mindfulness, and concentration. It is called *bhāvanā*. When the mind is calm and collected on the object, you will come to know distinctly between mind and matter through your own experience. And you will also come to see cause and effect

and impermanence of mental and physical phenomena. In this way, yogi develops even stronger faith and confidence in the practice. Your insight knowledge will mature by experiencing the true nature of mind and body. The moral shame and moral fear of missing meditative objects always play an important role in the progressive insights. The stronger the moral shame and moral fear, the faster you can make progress in the practice.

I have talked about two kinds of pleasure. To enjoy the pleasure of renunciation (*nekkhamma-sukha*), you have to renounce two kinds of desires (*kāma*): desirable objects (*vatthu-kāma*) and desire for them (*kilesa-kāma*). In order to renounce the sensual objects (*vatthu-kāma*), you join a meditation retreat or you ordain as a monk or nun in this center. To get free from sensual desire (*kilesa-kāma*), however, you need to practice *jhāna* (absorption) which is of two kinds: tranquility meditation to develop high-level concentration and mindfulness meditation to attain insight knowledge and *magga-phala* enlightenments.

Any kind of wholesome deed contributes to the pleasure of renunciation (*nekkhamma-sukha*), because they are all naturally disassociated with the sensual desire. For your better understanding, I would like to explain this kind of pleasure in terms of *jhāna*, which can be attained through the mental development practice (*bhāvanā*).

**Nekkhamma Means Kusala:** The *Pāli* texts describes *nekkhamma* as wholesome mental states which are called *Kusala*. The word “*Kusala*” is made up of two parts: *ku* and *sala*. “*Ku*” means disgusting and “*sala*” means to loosen (*kampa*) or to destroy (*viddhansana*). Disgusting are mental defilements, such as sensual desire, anger, hatred, grudge, displeasure, conceit, jealousy, delusion, lack of loving kindness and compassion. They have been deeply rooted in

one's mental process throughout the cycle of rebirths like a pillar that is deep in the ground and therefore difficult to pull out. You have to dig the ground in order to make the pillar loose before you can remove it. In the same way, you should loosen the mental defilements until you can uproot them. It is wholesomeness (*kusala*) that can loosen or weaken them. In this sense, all kinds of wholesomeness are called *kusala* or *nekkhamma*.

In further explanation, people have a strong desire for sensual pleasure (*tanhā*) as they mistake it for real happiness. They also have a wrong belief (*ditthi*) in two kinds of soul, individual soul and supreme soul. They are also proud of themselves thinking, "I am so and so" (*māna*). Thus, they have been clinging to sensual objects throughout the cycle of lives with desire (*tanhā*), conceit (*māna*), and a wrong view (*ditthi*). To loosen and uproot this clinging or all sorts of mental defilements, you need to develop two kinds of higher wholesomeness, which are called *jhāna*. They are high-level concentrations (*samatha-jhāna*) and *vipassana* insights (*vipassanā-jhāna*).

**Two Kinds of Jhāna:** *Jhāna* is defined as the mind fully focused on a meditative object (*āramanam jhāyati upanijjhāyatīti jhānam*). It is of two kinds: contemplation on a meditative object (*āramman-ūpanijjhāna*) and contemplation on the characteristics of psycho-physical phenomena, or ultimate peacefulness of *nibbāna* (*lakkhan-ūpanijjhāna*). The first one is to develop a high-level of concentration by contemplating one of the forty kinds of conceptual objects. For example, you have to contemplate on a living being as an object to develop *metta-jhāna* (the absorption in loving kindness), or on one of the ten meditative devices, such as a disk of soil (*pathavī-kasina*), to develop well-established concentration. This practice brings about two kinds of high-

level concentration, such as access concentration (*upacāra-jhāna*) and ultimate concentration (*appanā-jhāna*). They are called *samatha-jhāna*, because they make the mind calm and tranquil and also called *lokiya-jhāna*, because they are mundane.

The second type of *jhāna*, called *lakkhan-ūpanijjhāna*, consists of insight knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāna*) and *magga-phala* enlightenment (*magga-ñāna, phala-ñāna*). The insight knowledge contemplates on the individual and common characteristics of psycho-physical phenomena, called *sabhāva-lakkhanā* and *sāmañña-lakkhanā*, respectively. And *magga-phala* enlightenment contemplates on the uniqueness or peacefulness of *nibbāna* called *tatha-lakkhana* and *santi-lakkhana*, respectively. In brief, you can easily remember the two kinds of *jhāna* by simple names as *samatha-jhāna* and *vipassanā-jhāna*. The difference between the two is that *samatha-jhāna* contemplates on conceptual objects (*paññatti*) while *vipassanā-jhāna* contemplates on the individual and common characteristics of psycho-physical phenomena that are really happening (*paramattha*).

**Samatha and Vipassana:** To practice *samatha*, you need to contemplate on a single object without changing so that the mind gets well established on it without going elsewhere. By practicing *samatha*, one can easily attain concentration and tranquility. That is why *samatha* practice is compared to the stay at home. It is quite peaceful and tranquil to stay at home, but it brings you only a little knowledge. *Vipassanā* practice is compared to going or exploring out of your house, which can bring you various kinds of knowledge. By practicing *vipassanā* you can gain momentary concentration that is likely to make the unpleasant sensations obvious. That is why it is said that *vipassanā* practice is subject to unpleasant sensations. (It means that *vipassanā* practice may

not be as tranquil as *samatha* practice.) In brief, *samatha* is to develop concentration that makes the mind tranquil and peaceful, while *vipassanā* is to develop mindfulness that can bring about insight knowledge and *magga-phala* enlightenment.

**Two Kinds of Vehicle to Nibbāna:** There are those who practice *vipassanā* on the foundation of *samatha-jhāna*. First, they develop *samatha jhāna*, and then they practice *vipassanā* by observing the very *jhāna* they have attained. Such meditators are called *samatha-yānika*, those who practice *samatha* as a vehicle to *nibbāna*. There are also those who practice not *samatha*, but only *vipassanā* by observing mental and physical phenomena that are happening to them from moment to moment. They are called *suddha-vipassanā-yānika*, those who practice pure *vipassanā* as a vehicle to *nibbāna*, like you here.

The *samatha*-vehicle people apply two kinds of high-level concentration to *vipassana*: access concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*) and ultimate concentration (*appanā-samādhi*). The pure-*vipassana*-vehicle meditators practice *vipassana* with the help of momentary concentration (*khanika-samādhi*) that is developed by focusing on present prominent objects from moment to moment. Hence, there are three kinds of concentration: access concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*), ultimate concentration (*appanā-samādhi*), and momentary concentration (*khanika-samādhi*).

Yogis here are practicing pure *vipassanā* by noting present objects from moment to moment with sustained mindfulness. They only need to learn how to develop momentary concentration, both from theoretical and practical aspects. Actually, the momentary concentration (*khanika-samādhi*), if mature, can be compared to the ultimate concentration (*appanā-samādhi*).



Whether you practice *samatha* or *vipassanā* meditation, you have to cultivate concentration, either access and ultimate concentration for *samatha* or momentary concentration for *vipassanā*. Yogis are here practicing *vipassana-jhāna*. So, I will touch only on *vipassanā-jhāna*.

**Brief Explanation of Vipassanā:** You have to contemplate on one of the forty conceptual objects (*paññatti*) for *samatha* or on the ultimate phenomena (*paramattha*) for *vipassanā*. Exactly speaking, *vipassana* is focused on individual and common characteristics of psycho-physical phenomena that are classified into five kinds of aggregates (*khandā*), such as physical, sensational, perceptual, formational, and mental. Out of the five, you have to observe any one that is prominent at the present moment. That is why *Satipatthāna-vipassana* is explained by a very brief sentence in the Pāli texts of *Itivutthaka*. The sentence is composed of only eight syllables: “*Bhūtam bhūtato passati*, to see what are happening as they really are.” In this sentence, the word “*bhūtam*” (what are happening) shows what to observe, and “*bhūtato*” (to see them as they really are) shows how to observe.

**What to Observe:** The commentary says that what is really happening (*bhūtam*) are five aggregates and they are what to observe (*bhūtamti khandapañcakam*.) The first one, the physical aggregate, consists of physical phenomena, and the other four are mental phenomena. So, in brief, five aggregates mean psycho-physical phenomena. They are called “*bhūta*,” because they are newly born (*jāta*) or currently happening (*vijjamāna*) under the various conditions (*jātattā paccayehi*). They are what really real (*paramattha*) and what one can experience (*atta-paccakkha*). Something that has passed away or that does not yet come into existence cannot be called *jāta* (what is newly born), *vijjamāna* (what is currently happening), or *bhūta* (what really exist). In brief,

*bhūta* means the mental and physical phenomena that are currently arising for relevant reasons and can also be directly experienced. Such current phenomena are what to observe in meditation.

**How to Observe:** How should one observe these phenomena? It says, “as they really are” (*bhūtato*), which means you should be aware of them in terms of their individual and common characteristics (*bhūtato yathāsabhāvato salakkhanato samaññalakkhanato*). Yogis are asked to note rising and falling of the abdomen as home object. Actually, a yogi has to note any obvious objects as they really are. When a yogi experiences hardness in the body, note it as hard; congealing as congealing; roughness as roughness; softness as softness; stickiness as stickiness; moist as moist; wet as wet; heavy as heavy; light as light; hot as hot; warm as warm; cold as cold; stiff as stiff; tense as tense; movement as movement. And when the yogi is sitting down from standing position, the yogi should note it as sitting, sitting. In this way, the yogi has to note the phenomena as they really are.

**Unavoidable Concepts:** Although a yogi is supposed to be aware of the ultimate truth (i.e., psycho-physical phenomena (*paramattha*)), he or she has to deal with concepts (*paññatti*) unavoidably in the beginning of the practice. It is not easy to experience the ultimate truth (*paramattha*) right away. Of course, a yogi will see conceptual forms or shapes of a meditative object instead of its true characteristics in the beginning of the practice. Anyway, he or she has to make the objects known by labeling them with the conceptual names as mentioned above. Thus, the momentary concentration starts to take place and gain momentum in due course of time. In the case of *vipassana*, this momentary concentration itself is called mental purification (*citta-visuddhi*) because it protects the mind from hindrances (*nīvarana*), such as thought of

sensual pleasure, thoughts of aversion and, so on.

**What to Experience:** Mind and matter are interrelated as cause and effect. Nothing takes place without cause. Our physical phenomena are generated by four causes, such as our past *kamma*, mind, weather, and nutriment. Among the *kamma*-generated phenomena, the most obvious are five senses, such as eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body. Of course, mind, weather and nutriment are also supporting them in one way or another. That is why it is said that (they are) arising due to relevant causes (*yathāsakam paccayehi jatattā*). For example, what we call “rising and falling” are composed of the physical phenomena in an ultimate sense, such as stiffness, tension, pressure, and movement. They are totally conditioned by in-and-out breath and subconscious intention to breathe. So the rising and falling have relevant causes. These phenomena and their conditionality can be known through the mindfulness. They are called *atta-paccakkha*, what one can directly experience. In order to be aware of them, all you have to do is just to observe them the moment they take place.

**Five Jhānic Factors Involved in Vipassana:** It is very important to note a meditative object the moment it takes place, so that its true characteristic gets known to you. You should note rising and falling, for example, the moment they do so. Then you will become aware of physical phenomena involved in them, such as stiffness, tension and movement. In this case, the first thing you have to do is to aim or direct your attention toward it. Such aiming or initial attention is called *vitakka*, which is one of the *jhānic* factors. That aiming or attention should be sustained as if it were rubbing the object repeatedly. This sustained attention is called *vicāra*, another *jhānic* factor. Therefore, at the earlier state of the practice, these two *jhānic* factors play a very important role.

If you can note present objects with aiming (*vitakka*), full attention (*vicāra*), and ardent effort (*ātāpa-viriya*), mindfulness (*sati*) will take place. This mindfulness contributes to momentary concentration (*khanika-samādhi*) that is one of the *jhānic* factors. This concentration protects the mind from mental hindrances, such as thoughts of sensual pleasure, thoughts of aversion, and so on. Such concentration is naturally accompanied by joy (*pīti*) and happiness (*sukha*), another two *jhānic* factors. It reminds me of my childhood days when joy and happiness occurred to me the moment the marble I threw hit the target. You will find joy and happiness taking place along with momentary concentration when your noting mind hits the meditative object. That is the pleasure of renunciation (*nekkhamma-sukha*). You will realize how precious this kind of pleasure is compared to sensual pleasure. Thus, an early state of *vipassana* involves five *jhānic* factors, such as initial aiming or attention (*vitakka*), sustained attention (*vicāra*), joy (*pīti*), happiness (*sukha*), and concentration (*ekaggatā* or *samādhi*).

**Wholesome vs. Unwholesome:** Among the *jhānic* factors, the initial attention (*vitakka*) and sustained attention (*vicāra*) make the mind blossom, fresh, active and alert. These *jhānic* factors and ardent effort will help you overcome sleepiness. Another important mental factor is mindfulness (*sati*), which will protect your mind from defilements. That is why it is honored as a guard (*ārakkha*). The mind associated with it will not be agitated by sensual desire or lust, hatred or anger, and so on. Such mind will be calm and tranquil and concentrated. These mental factors have their own qualities. Without them, the practice will not be effective and uncertainty or doubt may prevail in your mind. Each individual factor may not be strong enough to fight the mental enemies but, when they are united into a group, they

can build up strength to fight the mental enemies.

I would like to encourage you to practice this mindfulness meditation wholeheartedly and diligently so that you can fully enjoy its benefits. To my dismay, however, I see some of the yogis behaving without mindfulness, especially during walking hours. I said earlier that you left sensual pleasure behind for this retreat. If you practice in such a careless manner, you will lose one more pleasure (that is, the pleasure of renunciation), which is even superior to the sensual pleasure. Therefore, you should practice diligently so that it will be worthy of leaving the sensual pleasure behind. Actually, I do not want to be strict on you, but simply want you to enjoy full benefits of the retreat.

I have explained two kinds of *jhāna*, *samathajhāna* and *vipassanājhāna*, from both theoretical and practical aspects. *Jhāna* means observing closely on the object, and there are five or six kinds of *jhānic* factors: initial application (*vitakka*), sustained application (*vicāra*), joy (*pīti*), happiness (*sukha*), equanimity (*upekkhā*), and one-pointedness of mind or concentration (*ekaggatā*). Here, *sukha* and *upekkhā* can be taken as one *jhānic* factor, because they are sensations. Only at the fourth stage of *jhāna*, happiness (*sukha*) replaced with equanimity (*upekkhā*.)

I do not know how accurately or precisely these *jhānic* factors are translated into English because my English is very limited. Some translate *vitakka* as thought and *vicāra* as reflection, and *pīti*, *sukha* and *upekkhā* in many different ways. Some of them may be satisfactory theoretically but not practically. So I will explain these *jhānic* factors from a practical aspect. I have explained *vitakka* and *vicāra* with the example of playing marbles. Now, I would like to explain more about them with other examples that are probably more obvious to you.

In order to pick up a piece of potato on the plate with a fork, for example, one has to apply two mental strengths: aiming or directing the fork towards the potato and then making effort to plunge the fork into it. If you just aim and direct the fork without putting effort, the fork will not reach the potato. If you only put effort without aiming, then the fork will land elsewhere. The aiming is like *vitakka*, initial attention, and the effort is *vīriya*. The fork touches and rubs onto the potato and the rubbing onto the potato is compared to *vicāra*, sustained attention.

There are five kinds of mental hindrances, called *nīvarana*, because they hinder and obstruct the *jhānic* factors. They are also called by three other names: *cetaso upakkilesa*, because they pollute the mind; *paññāya dubbalīkaranā*, because they make the knowledge weak or hinder it from arising so that the truth cannot be realized; and *āvarana*, because they block merit or wholesomeness from arising.

In order to gain the upper hand on these hindrances, one needs to develop mental strength which is directly countering them. The first hindrance is sensual desire (*kāmacchanda*), the desire to enjoy sensual objects, such as beautiful sights, sweet sounds, fragrant smell, tasty food, and pleasant touch. Lacking control, the mind goes to these various desirable objects. Such uncultivated minds will not be calm. If the concentration is present, the mind will not be jumping around but will be calm and collected. As long as concentration is present, this sensual desire has no chance to arise. In this way, one can get rid of the sensual desire with this directly opposite mental factor (i.e., concentration).

The second is ill-will (*byāpāda*) that includes anger, hatred, aversion, dissatisfaction, and grudge. Its direct opposite is joy (*pīti*), which makes the mind glad and joyful.

The third is sloth (*thina*) and torpor (*middha*), which make the mind contracted or constricted or slimy just like butter in the refrigerator, which is cold and congealed. *Thina* is not wanting to put effort in the wholesome work. *Middha* means lack of energy, becoming exhausted, wanting to take easy on the practice, wanting to stay in comfort. In order to make the mind blossom, open, active, and alert or to repel these sloth and torpor, one needs to develop *vitakka*, which is their direct opposite.

The fourth is mental restlessness (*uddhacca*) and remorse (*kukkucca*), which cause uneasiness or discomfort to the mind. In this case, the *jhānic* factor happiness (*sukha*) naturally makes the mind calm. Restlessness and remorse have to be dispelled by *sukha*.

The fifth hindrance is skeptical doubt or uncertainty (*vicikicchā*). One cannot have faith and confidence in the truth if one does not have enough knowledge to realize it or if it is beyond one's knowledge. When the attention can be sustained onto the object effectively, one will become certain about the truth or what kinds of phenomena are really happening or what are directly experienced. Then, there will be no room for skeptical doubt or uncertainty (*vicikicchā*). By putting the sustained attention (*vicāra*) in the mind, one will be free from uncertainty and doubt.

One needs to develop these mental strengths that can dispel hindrances (*nīvarana*). By strengthening these *jhānic* factors, one can dispel not only these hindrances (*nīvarana*) but other unwholesomeness, too.

If you do not manage to stop these hindrances, you will be in danger, like driving a car without a brake, causing a fatal accident sooner or later. To dispel the hindrances and, at the same time, to develop insight knowledge, one

needs to direct one's attention to the presently arising object (*vitakka*, *vicāra*) with ardent effort (*ātāpavīriya*). It can be compared to a person who is in combat or in a battlefield. If one is negligent, not mindful, then the enemy will gain the upper hand. The enemy will have victory over the one who is not mindful, who is not cautious in the battlefield. In the same way, yogis are in combat with these hindrances or defilements and, therefore, should be mindful all the time. Having skillfulness in the practice, a yogi can gain upper hand or victory on these hindrances and defilements, which has been following throughout cycle of rebirths (*samsāra*).

The translation of *vitakka* and *vicāra* as thought and reflection may fit to the worldly affairs like science. But, in the field of *vipassana* practice, thinking and reflecting of the past and future are not practical. Only if one is mindful of the presently arising object is it practical. Phenomena in the past or future are not ultimate reality (*paramattha*) because they do not really exist at the present moment. Practicing *Satipatthāna* meditation is to know who you really are. So one has to practice it to understand who he or she is. In oneself, there are mentality and materiality. They are relating to each other as cause and effect. These physical and mental phenomena are arising and passing away continuously, just like a stream of water current with the new water replacing the old one continuously. In order to discern the ultimate reality, one should observe the phenomena at the moment of their arising. One should not waste one's time thinking, imagining, or reflecting. One can directly experience the phenomena that arise at the present moment. The phenomena in the past no longer exist and cannot be really experienced. The phenomena in the future have not yet come into existence. So one should observe the phenomena that are fresh, new, and warm. Only then will one experience the truth or real



psycho-physical phenomena.

In order to see real lightning, for example, one should take a look at it at the moment it strikes. The lightening one sees before or after it really strikes is just imaginary. If you can look at it the moment it strikes, you will come to know it in its correct nature, how bright it is, how it dispels the darkness, what shape it is, whether it is crooked or straight. In the same way, to know mental and physical phenomena as they really are, one needs to observe them the moment they take place, by aiming the mind towards them with great effort so that one can be aware of them in their true nature. If one can do so, one will know them as they really are. That is why it is said: “*Bhūtam bhūtato passati*, see what are happening as they really are.”

I had explained the happiness of renunciation (*nekkhammā-sukha*) in the previous talks. It is said: “Leaving sensual desires (*kāma*) behind is happiness” (*kāmato nekkhammam sukham*). There are two kinds of desires (*kāma*): desirable objects (*vatthu-kāma*) and desire for them (*kilesā-kāma*). Beautiful sights, sweet sounds, tasty food, fragrant smell, and soft touch are desirable objects. One has a strong desire for them. Only when one can renounce both of them, can one be really happy. That is the happiness of renunciation (*nekkhamma-sukha*).

In order to free oneself from these two kinds of desires (*kāma*), the important role is played by *Vitakka*, paying initial attention to the meditative object, and by *vicāra*, sustaining that attention. In order to sew two pieces of cloth together, for example, one should aim the needle where to stitch and also make effort to pierce the needle into the two pieces of cloth. When the thread goes after the needle, then these two pieces of cloth will be stitched together. In the same way, in order to keep the mind connected with objects such as

rising and falling of the abdomen, one needs to aim the mind towards the object and makes effort for that.

If one can practice in this way for a minute, one will develop 60 moments of mindfulness and concentration. Such mental development is called *bhāvanā*. The literal meaning of *bhāvanā* is of two kinds: to give rise to the mental strength (*uppādanā*) and to increase, develop or cultivate the mental strength from small to big, from tender to mature (*vaddhanā*). One should develop mindfulness and concentration with these mental factors, such as initial attention, effort, and sustained attention.

In order to practice *jhāna* or *bhāvanā*, one needs to apply these two *jhānic* factors over and over again: *vitakka* and *vicāra*. That is why *jhāna* is characterized by *vitakka* and *vicāra* (*savitakkasavicāra*). It is also honored to be freed from two kinds of *kāma* as well as other kinds of unwholesomeness (*vivicca kāmehi vivicca akusalehi dhammehi*). It is also described to be accompanied by joy and happiness born from seclusion as a result of keeping away from sensual objects and sensual desires (*vivekajam pītisukham*).

This joy (*pīti*) and happiness (*sukha*) keep the yogi content and comfortable with practice, especially at the stage of the insight into arising and passing away of the phenomena (*udayabbayañāna*). Thus, one gains the happiness of renunciation (*nekkhammā-sukha*) by giving up sensual happiness (*kāmasukha*). At this stage, not only does the yogi not withdraw from the practice, but also becomes excited to have more and more experiences. His or her faith and confidence will get stronger in both the practice and its benefits. He or she also feels like his or her life is uplifted and comes to understand that *dhamma* pleasure excels the worldly pleasure manyfolds.

Most of the people usually enjoy the comfort of a bed. A lot of people, when they are free, just lie down and stay in comfort. If they are tired of lying on one side, they will shift to the other side. Thus, they enjoy a kind of pleasure called pleasure of lying and shifting from side to side (*passa-sukha*). When they wake up, they do not just get up immediately, but enjoy comfort before getting up. Such comfort is called pleasure of drowsiness (*middha-sukha*). That becomes one's lifelong habit. When they come to the meditation center for practice, this bad habit follows them. During the sitting hours, they are likely to enjoy nodding or taking a nap. To overcome this habit, one has to apply the *jhānic* factors and ardent effort so that the mind will become amazingly fresh, alert and active. Then, one will be able to see the presently arising phenomena, such as tension, tightness, pressure, motion, and vibration that are involved in rising and falling of the abdomen. Thus, the mindfulness will be firmly established on the object along with momentary concentration (*khanika-samādhi*). Without applying these *jhānic* factors and ardent effort, the awareness will be superficial and the yogi cannot go deep into the true nature, just like eating the food without enjoying its taste.

If one does not pay attention to eating the nut, for example, he or she will not know whether it tastes good or bad. Only when one pays attention to eating, can one fully enjoy the taste. In the same way, when the person is noting the object without aiming or directing the mind onto the object, without putting effort to note it, then the noting will not be effective. It will only be superficial. Those who note in this way will not know the nature of the object. The awareness will be tasteless. When the teacher asks them, "When you note rising, what phenomena do you come to know? When you note falling, what do you come to know?"

they will not be able to give proper answer to the question. They will be just reporting from their thoughts. On the other hand, if one pays attention to eating, one will know the taste. In the same way, when a yogi notes the object properly, the yogi will come to know the nature. It is called *sabhāva* or *sarasa*, the nature involved in the object that is compared to the flavor involved in the food.

Yogis should be noting the presently arising phenomena, which are the ultimate realities (*paramattha*). These phenomena have their own characteristics like the taste of the food. Regarding what and how to observe, I had mentioned the quote from the text: “*Bhūtam bhūtato passati*, one should observe what are happening as they really are.”

Each and every psycho-physical phenomenon has its unique characteristic (*sabhāva-lakkhana*) and common characteristic (*sāmañña-lakkhana*). Yogi can experience these two characteristics of phenomena by noting them the moment they take place. Every food we eat, for instance, has its own taste or flavor, such as sweet, sour, spicy hot, pungent, or bitter. These tastes are called *rasa* in Pāli, meaning what is desired by living beings. Just like the taste or flavor of food, the mental and physical phenomena have their own nature, their own characteristic. The nature of material phenomena is described in general as what is fragile under conflicting conditions, such as heat, and cold, etc. The general characteristic of mental phenomena is to cognize sense-objects.

Among the material phenomena, I will explain the four fundamental elements. Earth element (*pathavī-dhātu*) has the nature of hardness, softness or roughness. The nature of water element (*āpo-dhātu*) is moisture, wetness, cohesion, heaviness, or congealing. The characteristic of the fire element (*tejo-dhātu*) is heat, warm, or cold. The wind element (*vāyo-*

*dhātu*) is characterized by pressure, tension, or movement.

Among the mental phenomena, the mental contact (*phassa*), for example, has the nature of contacting the mind to the sense-objects. Sensation or feeling (*vedana*) has the nature of feeling the sense-objects. In the same way, all the rests of the mental phenomena have their own nature. These natures are what really exist (*bhāva*) or ultimate reality (*paramattha*). They are their individual characteristics (*sabhāva*), like the different taste of different food. Sugar, for example, has a sweet taste, lime or lemon a sour taste, chili a spicy, hot taste and so on. Although one knows the taste of the food, one cannot show it, as it is just known to the mind. In the same way, each and every phenomenon arising moment by moment in the body has its own taste, nature or characteristic. In order to realize them, one has to chew them with *Satipathāna* practice.

Although “rising, falling of the abdomen” is noted in common language, what actually to experience is the nature of wind element, such as stiffness, tension or movement involved in the rising process and relaxation, contraction, and movement in the falling process. In order to be aware of such natures, a yogi needs to note objects applying *jhānic* factors. At the beginning of the practice, however, a yogi may not see such true nature but only sees form or shape of the abdomen or mode or manner of moving. In due course of time, concentration will get strong enough to realize the true natures beyond the form, shape, or manner. Depending onto where the noting mind falls, a yogi will come to know stiffness, tension, or movement accordingly. Thus, there are three things to be known by observing mental and physical phenomena: form and shape (*santhāna*), mode or manner (*ākāra*), or nature (*sabhāva*).

The meditation teacher may ask a yogi, “Can you

note rising and falling concurrently with full attention and concentration? If you can do so, what do you come to know? Noting rising, what do you come to know? Noting falling, what do you come to know?" A yogi who notes properly and honestly will be able to give the proper answers to the questions. A yogi must answer whether he or she comes to know form and shape of the abdomen, or mode or manner of moving, or the nature, such as stiffness, tension, warmth, cold, heat, pressure, movement, and so on. If the yogi gave the answers from his or her own thoughts or imagination, his or her answers would not be satisfying to the teacher.

When one experiences the individual natures or characteristics of psycho-physical phenomena, one will also come to know their common characteristic (i.e., impermanence, suffering, and non-self). For example, if one eats something sweet, one feels a sweet taste on the tongue, and one will also find the sweet taste as well as the experience of it dissolve after a moment. Arising and passing away is common to every phenomenon. Through strong concentration and mature mindfulness, one will see these natures.

The phenomena such as stiffness, tension, and movement that are involved in the rising and falling of the abdomen are made up of wind element. That is why they are included in material aggregate (*rūpa-kkhandha*). And they are also called the tangible sense-base (*phothabbāyatana*) and tangible element (*phothabbadhātu*), just because they are tangible and touchable. In terms of the four truths (*sacca*), they are counted as the truth of suffering (*dukkha-sacca*) simply because they are impermanent. If one fails to note them the moment they arise, one will not realize the truth. Then, there will be ignorance (*avijjā*) in the place of realization. *Avijjā* is not only simply unknowing but also wrongly knowing (i.e.,

delusion like the eye with cataract with which one cannot see things clearly or correctly). By developing knowledge, ignorance and delusion will automatically be dispelled just like the light dispels the darkness.

If the yogi is able to note properly, the knowledge will arise and the yogi will profit. Then the yogi can enjoy the happiness of renunciation (*nekkhamma-sukha*). Then it would be worthy of giving up worldly pleasure (*kāma-sukha*). Otherwise, the yogi will lose both renunciation pleasure and sensual pleasure. So one should check whether one is losing or making profit. Practicing *Satipathāna* meditation is to uplift one's quality of life.

I would like to explain more about the common characteristic. When you see phenomena arising and passing away in line with the law of cause and effect, you will come to realize that there is no personal soul (*jīva-atta*) and universal soul (*parama-atta*) involved. Actually, this common characteristic is concept (*paññatti*), not what you can directly experience (*paramattha*). Suppose, for example, there are three holes in your shirt. The holes and the shirt are not the same. The holes cannot exist without the shirt. Actually, what really exists is the shirt, but not the holes. In the same way, mental and physical phenomena are what really exist, and what you can experience in terms of their individual characteristics, such as stiffness, cold, heat, etc. Suppose, you experience the stiffness in the rising abdomen. That means you see an individual characteristic of the wind element beyond form and manner of the abdomen. Then you can also see the stiffness passing away. Thus, you can spontaneously realize its common characteristic, such as impermanence, etc. The same is true with the true nature of other objects. If they are noted properly, you will come to know what they really are.

Even the minute activity like blinking of an eye, if you can note it properly, you will come to know its unique characteristic as well as its common characteristic. You will come to be aware of tension or stiffness discomfort in the eye. You feel discomfort in your eyes, and you want to ease it. So, first the intention to blink takes place, and then the actual blinking follows, and discomfort relieves. In the process of blinking of the eyes, the intention to blink is the mental phenomenon, and the actual blinking is physical phenomenon. They are interrelated as cause and effect. By noting such minute object, you can realize the true nature of phenomena. That is why you are asked to note with full attention whatever activity you do.

You should be noting continuously from the time you get up until you go to bed. In whichever posture you may be in, such as lying, standing, sitting or walking, you should be noting continuously. You may think that it is too much to note every object continuously. Actually, if you divide practice into three sections, such as sitting, walking and general activities, it will not be that much. During sitting, you note rising and falling of the abdomen as the primary object, as well as other prominent secondary objects that arise. During the walking, you keep your attention on the feet noting lifting, moving, and placing. And, at other times, when you are doing general activities, you should be noting every movement. You should have the determination: "I will not fail to note anything obvious to me, even the smallest minute activity." If you have such determination and note carefully, you will miss very few. Although you miss, you will know it.

During the sitting meditation, you are supposed to note rising and falling of the abdomen as the primary object. When the secondary objects, such as pain and wandering



thoughts, become prominent, you can note them, too. During walking, you should keep your attention on the foot and note lifting, moving, and placing. You should not pay attention to other objects during walking in the way you do during sitting. When noting lifting, moving and placing, the noting mind may fall on the form or shape, or mode or manner of the foot. Yet, it is still beneficial to some extent. But your noting mind should not rest only on that stage. It should go beyond that until the true nature of the object, such as lightness, that is characterized by air element and the series of intention that determines the actual lifting. And when the foot is released to place down, the heaviness will be obvious. When the foot is fully placed on the ground, you may feel resistance against the ground, hardness, or softness. In order to know the true nature involved in lifting, moving, and placing, you should be noting them concurrently.

At the end of the lane, you should stop and note standing. While standing, the legs or the feet are fully rested on the floor with the upper body upright. You should keep the awareness not only on the feet or legs but also the entire body as a whole. There are the series of intentions to stand which generate the actual standing. Also there is air element in the body that is supporting the body to be upright, stiff, and erect. You should be aware of them. In order to know them as they really are, as I mentioned repeatedly, you should be noting them the moment they are obvious. And, when turning, also you should do it slowly and mindfully noting turning, turning, turning. I found some yogis looking here and there without mindfulness. *Pāli* text says that a yogi should act as if he or she was blind although having good eyesight (*cakkhumāp yathā adho*). When going, you are supposed to keep your eyes down, looking about six feet ahead. Remember it is only the eyes but not the head to keep down.

If you look up something unmindfully, for example, you will fail to be aware of many objects to note, such as lifting up the eyes or the head, looking up and seeing something. Hence, you fail to be aware of their true nature. Similarly, even though you hear, you should act like a deaf person. And also you may have good knowledge of arts or science or whatever, but during the retreat, you should not apply them to the *vipassana* practice. You should be noting the present objects with full effort. In the practice, you should not analyze what, how or why. Such analysis would make you fail to be aware of present phenomena that are arising moment by moment. *Pāli* texts recommend that you should behave as if you were dumb although you are smart (*paññavāssa yathā mūgo*). The point is to be aware of phenomena that are arising moment by moment.

The activities like standing up, sitting down, bending, and stretching should also be done slowly and mindfully. You are strong, you can get up or sit down abruptly. During the practice, however, you should act like sick, weak, and feeble person, doing everything slowly and mindfully, so that you can keep pace with the activities you are doing. But the noting mind must be always fast and active, so that you can note the presently arising object. As a matter of fact, there are things that should be done quickly. For example, you should cross the road quickly; otherwise, the car might hit you. There are some things that should be done at a normal speed, neither hastily nor slowly. There are also certain things that must be done slowly and carefully. For example, in hospitals there are patients who need to be handled with care. If a nurse handles such a patient very roughly the patient might pass away. That is why you should make the right choice of speed according to the situation.

If a yogi follows the instruction, she or he can make

progress in the practice of developing the mindfulness, concentration and insights within a few days.

### **Two Requirements for Progress**

It is not without reason that you can accomplish the pure and perfect culture in body, speech, and mind. There are two reasons in *Pāli*: *sādhukam savana* and *sādhukam manasi-karana*.

1. *Sādhukam savana*: The first one is to listen and learn the guidance carefully and appreciatively, so that you can do well in the practice. Especially during an intensive retreat like this, it is very important to learn the detailed guidance given with examples.
2. *Sādhukam manasi-karana*: The second reason for progress in the practice is to put what you have learned into practice by observing present objects concurrently and precisely.

If you fail to meet any of these two requirements, you will not reach anywhere or cannot make any progress in cultivating the pure and flawless culture. In this case, teachers cannot help you either, and your retreat would be just a waste of time.

When we make an attempt to accomplish our purpose, whatever it may be, it is very important to learn the correct method first. I can guarantee that you will be able to accomplish the pure and perfect culture if you try to meet the two requirements. Please try your best to meet them, and I guarantee you faster progress within a few days. Otherwise, I cannot promise you anything.

Whatever you do for spiritual development or for secular achievement, it is very important to have the understanding of its value and benefits. You need to know what kinds of

benefits you can gain from the task you are doing. Only then can your trust and faith get strong and steadfast. Otherwise, you would not be interested in doing the task and, therefore, will not make any effort to accomplish it. The less interested you are in the task, the weaker your effort would become. Therefore, it is very important to have strong faith and confidence in the practice.

### **Reasoning to Confusing**

Analyzing or reasoning something beyond your reach is just a waste of time. In daily life, it is very valuable to think about whether something is right or wrong, sensible or not, agreeable or not. When you practice meditation after having learned the correct method, however, it is very important to make an effort with full faith without analyzing or reasoning. Reasoning can bring you confusion when you cannot draw the true conclusion. Moreover, you are likely to be misled by the confusion in the guise of reasoning power or wisdom. So, if you are thinking what, why or how in the case of meditation practice, you will end up being confused and wasting your time.

Once a Brahman hermit came to the Buddha and said that he had learned so many doctrines that he found it difficult to decide which one was true and got confused in the end. The Buddha then said openly that he could not help those who got confused because of their attitude to accept nothing without analyzing or reasoning or practical experiment. Even the Buddha himself gave up on such analytical people.

**Layer of delusion:** When in practice, if you have faith that this *satipatthana* meditation surely guarantees benefits starting from mental purification, you should not waste your time analyzing and reasoning. You should just focus your mind on the present phenomena happening in your body and

note them concurrently and precisely and be aware of them as they really are. Noting or observing is the only thing for a yogi to do, nothing else. If, instead of carrying the only duty, you are involved in so many extra things like analyzing or reasoning, you would not be able to observe the present objects in time. You will miss noting more and more objects. Then you cannot be aware of the truth. Then ignorance becomes thicker and thicker. That is what we call “the layer of ignorance” (*moha-patala*). It is delusion resulting from a failure to be mindful of the present phenomena as they really are. Suppose you are not mindful for one minute and delusion will prevail in you for one minute. If you count one layer of delusion in one second, there would pile up sixty layers of delusions in a minute or 300 layers in five minute or 3600 in one hour. That is how layer of delusion becomes thicker and thicker every moment. Then you would end up being extremely confused with what, why, how. That is what we called a “massive tangle of delusion” (*sammoha-parigunthita*). Without practice of mindfulness, you cannot get out of such a massive tangle. That is why the Buddha described the failure of mindfulness as *moha-patala* (layer of delusion) and *sammoha-parigunthita* (massive tangle of delusion).

When we cultivate the pure and flawless culture with moral precepts, we become real human beings. With strong concentration, we become a human being with tranquil and stable mind and, with progressive knowledge, we become a real human being with human mindset or sublime attitude. It is very important for you to bear human attitude, human mindset, and human wisdom. To cultivate such a human quality, the best method is *satipatthana* meditation. That is why, in the beginning of the *Satipatthana Sutta*, the Buddha himself promised the benefits available from this practice,

including mental purification. It is simple and valuable. If you practice, you can become pure and flawless in body, speech, and mind. Thus, with self-restraint based on the mindfulness on top of loving kindness and sympathy, you spontaneously protect others from being hurt. And also you can spontaneously protect yourself from committing evil. Accomplishing one's own interests and that of others is real culture. In order to gain such a real culture, it is very important to develop the real enlightenment or real wisdom.

### **Five Qualities of a Successful Yogi**

A person with such a real culture is called “*padhāniya*” or a person who is able to accomplish the practice. Such a person has five qualities called “*padhāniy'anga*” that promise him the enlightenment in this very life. They are: faith, good health, honesty, effort, and the insight into arising and passing away.

**Faith:** The first quality is regarding faith. I do not want to emphasize faith in the Buddha, because some people may take it as personal worship. However, you need to have faith at least in *satipatthāna* meditation that it can bring you so-and-so benefits. Without such faith, it is impossible to accomplish the *satipatthāna* meditation. You also should have self-confidence that you are capable in accomplishing it with true method. So, it is important to have faith in the benefits of the practice and in your own ability. It is not that you have to believe it as the teachers insist. Faith tends to arise in something if you find it worthy of faith. That is the faith I mean here, but not the blind belief (*muddha-pasanna*). It is very sensible to have such a worthy faith.

**Good Health:** You need to be healthy enough to put effort in the practice until you accomplish it. However, nowadays nobody can be said to be hundred percent healthy. If your

digestion system is good enough for the food you have eaten, you are regarded as healthy enough for the practice. So, you are not required to be completely healthy. This is the second quality of a successful yogi.

**Honesty:** The third quality is honesty. This means you need to have moral courage to reveal your weakness to the people who are worthy of it, when necessary, so that they can help you to correct your mistakes and weak points. You should not hide your weakness and defects all the time. Also, you should not deceive or mislead people by pretending to have qualities that you do not really have. Suppose, for example, you are asked what your experience of the observation of rising and falling of the abdomen is, and you give answer by imagining what would be impressive to the teacher or something like that. Or, if you are asked whether you are able to note thoroughly and being afraid of blame, you may give answer, "Yes, I am." Hiding your weakness or fault, you give an answer that is not true to your own experience. That is what dishonest people do. You should not be like that. You should give answers honestly when the teacher asks. You may be asked whether you are able to note the rising and falling of the abdomen concurrently; if so, what you are really aware of when you note. Just answer what you really experience. It is very important to be honest when you report your experience to the teacher. It is just like a patient and doctor. The doctor prescribes the medicine when he gives treatment. He will ask whether you take medicine as prescribed, how the medicine responses, or something like that. Based on your answer, the doctor gives you suitable advice for further treatment. The same is true with the meditation teacher and yogi. So it is very important for you, as a yogi, be honest when you report your experience to the teacher.

**Effort:** The fourth quality that requires a yogi is the effort. As a yogi, you have to put great effort in the practice, even without taking care of your life and limbs. You should be always ready to note the phenomena the moment they take place in your body and mind. You should be always active, so that you will not miss any prominent object that occurs to you.

**Insight into the Rising and Passing Away:** If you meet the above four qualities, you will be able to see mental and physical phenomena arising and passing away. Then, you will be able to enjoy the taste of the *Dhamma*. This *dhamma* taste will take you to the destination, the accomplishment of *dhamma*. You may no longer need the meditation teacher to encourage you to make effort in the practice. So, this fifth quality is actually the result of the first four.

It is important to ask yourself whether you have full faith in the practice and in your ability to accomplish it. It is important to have steadfast and unshakable faith in the practice and yourself. Health should not be a problem for you. You need to check yourself whether you have honesty or honest attitude. If not, try your best to be honest to yourself and to the teacher as well. And then, ask whether you are making great effort to be mindful every moment without missing anything. You are the one who knows most of yourself. That is all.

You should be noting one object after another constantly, so that there will be no time for you to be lazy and no time for mental defilements to interfere. Thus, you can block the flow of mental defilements, giving way to wholesomeness. If you follow this way, you will soon be doing well with the practice. In the case of *dhamma* practice, only when you are noting objects moment by moment can the spiritual powers gain momentum. Every effort can bring power. It is



just like the battery that is charged by every moment of the running engine. The more effort you have, the more power you gain.

Suppose, at times, you make an effort in the practice; at times you have chit-chat, at times you think of this or that, at times you gaze at something then your practice cannot gain momentum required for the development of spiritual powers. You are likely to feel disappointed of your practice, since you cannot make progress. You may practice with this teacher or that teacher without any achievement. You simply waste your time. Some yogis even proudly say that he or she has ever practiced with so and so great teacher. Although the teacher may be great on his part, you should see how well you do on your part, whether you are noting moment by moment. So, hereby I would like to strongly encourage you to put great effort in the practice during the remaining time of the retreat.

I have explained that during walking, you should keep your attention on the foot and note lifting, moving, and placing without paying attention to secondary objects like seeing, hearing, thoughts or itchiness. If the mind is totally distracted by these and goes off the foot, or if you really want to note them, however, you have to stop walking and note them accordingly. Right afterward, you should go back to the feet and note lifting, moving, and placing. The reason is that, if you note other objects while you are walking, you would get confused among the moving feet and secondary objects, and your awareness would be superficial. This is the difference between sitting meditation and walking meditation.

During walking, it is the legs that should be moving and other parts remain still and steady. You should just look down instead of here and there. There may be noises and voices, but you should not pay attention to them. Even though you have

a good ear, you should act like a deaf person. You should control you eyes and ears. Although you may have good knowledge, you should act like dumb. I mean you should strictly follow the teacher's guidance, with full faith and confidence, without giving any excuse. Otherwise, the yogi would waste your time thinking, analyzing, or reasoning. Although you are strong, you should do all the activities like standing up, sitting down, bending, stretching, and moving slowly, just like a sick, weak person would do. The only difference is you do your activities with mindfulness.

During walking, you should pay full attention to your feet. But I saw some yogis searching for something in their pockets or scratching their heads while walking. For sure, their attention was drawn to other activities. In this way, they cannot develop mindfulness. There is an example in the text. If one pushes a cart full of water on the uneven ground (just imagine the ancient India where the roads were uneven), one should do slowly and carefully with attention; otherwise, the water will spill out.

**Five Benefits of Walking:** Walking meditation (*cankama*) is walking to and fro with mindfulness. It is not a physical exercise or leisure activity. You should walk slowly and mindfully. There are five benefits of walking: stamina for long journeys (*addhāna-kkhamo*), stamina for hard practice (*padhāna-kkhamo*), fewer diseases (*appābādo*), better digestion (*suparināmāhāra*), and durable concentration (*cirathitika-samādhi*). The last benefit is the most important for the practice. If you can develop the concentration in walking and carry it to sitting practice continuously, you can make faster progress in the practice.

**Two Kinds of Yogis:** Now, I would like to explain two kinds of yogi, the yogi who practices *samatha* as a vehicle to *nibbāna* (*samatha-yānika*) and the yogi who practices

pure *vipassanā* as a vehicle to *nibbāna* (*suddha-vipassanā-yānika*.) The *samatha*-vehicle yogis have to focus their mind on a particular object until they attain access concentration or ultimate concentration. And then they are to contemplate on the *jhānic* factors, or *jhānic* mind or any kind of physical phenomena, to develop *vipassana* insights stage by stage until they reach the *magga-phala* or path-fruit/enlightenment. For pure-*vipassana* yogis, they have to contemplate their minds on phenomena that are arising moment by moment. Such moment-to-moment contemplation gives rise to momentary concentration. Without momentary concentration, you cannot attain the insight into mind and matter, let alone higher insights, such as the insight into cause and effect, the insight into impermanence, suffering and nonself, the insight into arising and passing away, and so on. This momentary concentration is necessary for the *vipassana*-vehicle yogis to develop insight knowledge stage by stage until they become fully enlightened. In any event, nobody can be enlightened without practicing *vipassana* meditation.

Here momentary concentration is compared to a rope that is made up of many small fibers. Each small fiber is fragile and breakable. But when they are entwined into a rope, the rope becomes amazingly strong. In the same way, in the case of pure *vipassana* practice, the concentration lasts only moment by moment, because it is established on phenomena that are arising and disappearing moment by moment. So it cannot be strong. However, if you can develop it continuously, with no gaps in between by noting phenomena continuously, it can become strong enough to penetrate into the truth or to develop *vipassana* insights stage-by-stage until you become fully enlightened.

This kind of concentration is called by several names in *Pāli* text, such as *khanika-samādhi* (momentary

concentration), *khanika-cittekaggatā* (momentary one-pointedness of mind), and *khanamattatthitiko samādhi* (moment-by-moment lasting concentration). Encouraging is that this concentration, the *Pāli* text says, can become well established on the meditative objects like the *jhānic* concentration (“*sopi hi----- appito viya thapeti*”). Here a question may be raised: “Yogi is aware of different phenomena every moment, suppose, stiffness one moment, and warmth or cold next moment. How can this momentary concentration become well established?” Because it is undefeated by five mental hindrances, such as thought of sensual pleasure (*patipakkhehi anabhibhūto*). If you keep on noting one phenomenon after another, this concentration will go continuously without gap between preceding and succeeding ones (*nirantara*) like water current. Such momentary concentration can keep the mind away from the mental hindrances and can become well established like a *jhānic* one.

Some of the yogis may think it is impossible to be mindful every single moment. They may also think that I put too much pressure on the yogis. Actually, at the stage of higher level of insight knowledge, this momentary concentration will not be ruined, even if a yogi purposely does something to ruin it. At those stages, the noting mind will automatically fall back onto the object. Even if you were to test your mind with romantic or disgusting objects, it would not be agitated by the mental defilements. It will always come back to the meditative objects, just like the boomerang of Australia that always comes back to the skilled player although it is thrown away.

**Five Ways to Nurture the Vipassana:** You cannot expect the insight knowledge to take place overnight. As a pure-*vipassana*-vehicle yogi, you have to plant and nurture the *vipassanā* seed systematically. There are five ways to

nurture the *vipassanā* seed so that it can grow well and bear fruits of *maggā-phala* enlightenment: by practicing morality (*sīlā-nuggahita*), by listening to instruction, guidance and talks (*sutā-nuggahita*), by discussing one's experience with the teacher (*sākacchā-nuggahita*), by calming or quieting the hindrances through the *samatha* meditation, such as loving-kindness (*metta*) meditation (*samathā-nuggahita*), and by developing mature *vipassanā* insights (*vipassanā-nuggahita*).

Suppose, for example, a gardener plants a mango seed. It will not be just enough to plant the seed, but he needs to take care of it in several ways. Like building a fence around the plant for protection, a yogi needs to protect the *vipassanā* seed by practicing morality. Like providing the plant with the appropriate amount of water, a yogi need to learn the correct method of practice by listening to instructions, guidance, and talks (*uggaha*). Like cleaning weeds under the plant, a yogi needs to discuss with his teacher to make clear any confusion. [Here, asking question, is called *paripucchā*; listening to the instructions of how to note, how to observe in detail is called *savana*; bearing what learned in mind is *dhāraṇa*; reflecting and putting the theory into practice is *sammasana*.]

Buddha described three suitable places for meditation practice: in the forest, under a tree, and in a secluded place. Here, in this meditation center, there are trees, so it is somewhat like a forest, but I do not mean that you have to sit under a tree. And also this meditation center is quiet and peaceful and, therefore, should be regarded as a secluded place (*suññāgāra*). You made the right choice to come and practice here in this center. Regarding the suitable posture, Buddha taught us how to sit properly, i.e., to sit cross-legged with the upper body upright (*pallankam ābhuzitvā ujum kāyam paṇidhāya*). You should sit comfortably with legs

crossed, without pressing one leg onto the other. You can see in the Buddha image how the upper body is upright. It should be ninety degrees perpendicular to the floor. And then direct the noting mind into the meditative object (*parimukham satim upatthapetvā*). According to Mahasi tradition, yogis should direct the noting mind towards the rising and falling of the abdomen as the main object and follow it from beginning to the end. So, that is how to nurture and protect one's practice by learning, discussing, and putting them into practice (*sutānuggahita and sākacchānuggahita*).

**Right Place and Right Time to Note:** When you practice meditation, it is very important to focus your attention on the right place at the right time. If you are to welcome a guest, for instance, you should welcome him or her at the right time and right place. You need to know his or her arrival time and arrival gate at the airport. In the same way, when practicing meditation, you should focus your attention on the right place; i.e., where the object is obvious. And also you should note the object at the right time; i.e., your noting mind must be concurrent with the present object. If you want to note in-and-out breath, the nostril is the right place on which to focus, and your noting must be concurrent with present breath, in or out. If you observe rising and falling, the right place to focus on is the abdomen, and your awareness must be concurrent with the present abdominal movement. If you practice walking meditation, you should keep your attention on the feet, noting concurrently lifting, moving, and placing. Only then can your awareness go deep enough to penetrate into the truth.

**Cittānupassanā:** I have been told that some people are particularly practicing the awareness of mind (*cittānupassanā*). They say they are contemplating their mind. So, it is important to make it clear where their attention

is focused and whether they can note the present mind concurrently. They should also check whether the way they practice is in harmony with the teaching of the Buddha.

The *Satipatthāna Sutta* mentions four categories of meditative objects, such as physical object, sensational object, mental object, and general object. You should start practicing *Satipatthāna* meditation with the object that is most prominent. *Visuddhimagga*, “The Path of Purification”, says: “*yathāpākatam vipassanābhīniveso = Vipassana* focuses on whatever is prominent.” Among the four categories, the physical object is mentioned first, because it is the most prominent. And this category consists of two kinds, four fundamental elements (*mahābhūta*) and dependent elements (*upādā*). The four fundamental elements are more prominent than the other dependent elements. Again, among these four fundamental elements, the air element, characterized by stiffness, tension, movement, etc., is the most prominent. That is why you should give priority to noting the air element that is obvious especially in the in-and-out breathing, rising and falling of the abdomen, or lifting, moving, and placing of the feet.

When a child starts going to school, for example, the first lessons he learns should be few and simple, so that he can learn well. In the same way, at the beginning of the practice, one should start practicing with objects that are easily perceivable or prominent. Otherwise, he or she might get confused.

**Is Noting Rising and Falling Taught by the Buddha:** In *Satipatthāna Sutta*, the Buddha taught contemplation on in-and-out breath and on walking meditation. In the *Mahasi* tradition, however, yogis are asked to note the rising and falling of the abdomen as the primary object. Here a question may be posed, “Is this the object the Buddha directly taught

us to note?” The Buddha directly taught us to note physical phenomena. Rising and falling of the abdomen are composed of physical phenomena that can be categorized as physical aggregate (*rūpakkhanda*), as the sense-base of bodily sensation (*phoṭṭhabba-āyatana*), as the element of bodily sensation (*kāya-dhātu*) and as the truth of unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha-saccā*). Although the word “rising and falling of the abdomen” is not directly mentioned in the text, it is definitely composed of the air element generated by in-and-out breathing. More obviously, this rising and falling of the abdomen is one of six kinds of air mentioned in the *Pāli* texts, such as up-going air (*uddham-gama*), down-going air (*adho-gama*), the air in the intestine (*kotthāsaya*), the air in the abdomen (*kucchisaya*), the air flowing the whole body generating the bodily movement (*angam-anga-nusārī*) and, finally, in-and-out breathing (*ānāpāna*).

There is a phrase in the *Satipatthāna Sutta*: “*Sabbakāya-patisamvedī*, perceiving the entire object.” It means that, when you note an object, your awareness should follow from its very beginning all the way to its end. Only then will your awareness cover and spread over the entire object. That is the meaning of the phrase *sabbakāya-patisamvedī*. It is quite easy for every body to be aware of such physical objects as rising and falling of the abdomen from the very beginning to the end. As for the awareness of mind, the object is too subtle for a beginner to find where to focus and how to note it concurrently. You need to make it clear where your attention is focused on and how you follow the mind from the very beginning to the very end.

I practiced *satipatthāna* meditation under the guidance of the late Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw before I turned thirty. From my own experience, I have firm faith and confidence in this method. I have been teaching this method for over



fifty years. I want to share this *dhamma* with you. I would like to explain the meditative objects for pure-*vipassanā*-vehicle yogi, because it is necessary for you to know what accurately to note when you practice pure *vipassana*.

The late Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw explained in detail the objects to note when practicing *vipassana*. The object of *vipassana* is the ultimate realities (*paramattha*) that refer to mental and physical phenomena (*nāma rūpa*), which are interrelated as cause and effect and are impermanent, suffering, and nonself.

**Paramattha (Ultimate Reality):** The word “*paramattha*” consists of two parts: *parama* (ultimate) and *attha* (reality). If something is unreal, it cannot be regarded as ultimate. What ultimate is what is really real. The ultimate reality (*paramattha*) consists of four categories: mind or consciousness (*citta*), mental factors (*cetasika*), such as mental contact, feeling, etc., physical phenomena (*rūpa*), and the cessation of all mental and physical phenomena (*nibbāna*). These four are called *paramattha* (ultimate reality), because they are real, with their own characteristics. And *paramattha* is also defined as what is known through one’s own experience (*attapaccakkha*). There are two sources of knowledge, learning and own experience. The knowledge gained through own experience is more reliable than the one through learning.

**The Difference Between Concept and Reality:** If you close your hand into a fist, for example, what do you really experience? If you observe your fist carefully, you will experience tension that is one of the physical characteristics. And also there is knowing mind, which is one of the mental phenomena. There is also a series of intentions to close the hand into a fist, which is mentality. If you close the hand harder into a fist, it will become more and more tense. The

first tension is not the same as the second, and the second tension is not the same as the third. If you concentrate on them very carefully, you will see changes in the tension. As a result of tension, you will also experience heat and discomfort. Then the desire to relieve tension takes place, which is mental phenomenon. Then, you would make the decision: "I will open my hand to relieve the tension." This decision is also mental phenomenon. When you really open the hand, the tension is relieved right away. By noting closing and opening of the hand, you will come to know these mental and physical phenomena through your own experience. They are *paramattha*, the ultimate truth, because you can really experience them.

In order to see such ultimate phenomena, it is very important to observe an object the moment it takes place. Otherwise, you cannot even be aware of its form or shape (*santāna-paññatti*) or its manner (*ākāra-paññatti*), let alone the ultimate phenomena involved in it, such as stiffness, tension, discomfort, heat, etc., (*paramattha*).

Here, I would like to give you an example to differentiate between conceptual objects (*paññatti*) and ultimate phenomena (*paramattha*). In front of this *dhamma* hall, there is a line of black ants. If you take a look at it from very far, you will not see it. If you look at it closely enough, you will see it as somewhat like a black line. The name 'black line' is a kind of concept called *nāma-paññatti*, and the idea of the black line is a concept of solidity (*samūha-paññatti*). The shape or form of the line is concept of form or shape (*santhāna-paññatti*). If you take a closer look at the line, you will see the line as something moving. Again, if you take an even closer look, you will see individual ants going one by one. Then you will no longer see it as a solid line. Thus, the concept of solidity and concept of form or shape (*samūha-*

*paññatti, santāna-paññatti*) will disappear.

In the same way, if you want to know the true characteristics involved in objects, such as rising and falling, you should note them the moment they take place with aiming and effort. Depending on where and which moment the noting mind falls onto, you will come to know stiffness, tension, heaviness, lightness, warmth, cold or heat, and so on. Thus, mindfulness and concentration will become well established on the object. That is the meaning of *Satipatthāna*. Then the mind will not go anywhere else and gets calm and tranquil without being agitated by craving or aversion. If you can note present objects, you are expected to see such true phenomena within one or two sittings. If you have not yet seen them, even after many days or weeks, that may mean something wrong with your practice. So, it is very important to learn how to practice properly, so that you can develop concentration, mindfulness and insight knowledge.

**Two Kinds of Vipassanā Knowledge:** Now I will explain what to observe and what not to observe among them and two kinds of *vipassana* insights that can be gained by observing them.

The ultimate reality can be classified into two kinds, mundane and supramundane. To develop *vipassana* insight, you have to observe only the mundane, not the supramundane, that refers to Path and Fruition mental phenomena and *nibbāna*. Why shouldn't you observe the supramundane? Simply because you have not yet attained them. Even if you attained them, there would be no purpose to observe them as a *vipassana* object to remove mental defilements, because you never get attached to them, and they never bring you any kind of mental defilement. As for the mundane phenomena, if you fail to observe them, you will get attached to them under the illusion that they are permanent, pleasant and

personal. Here, the late Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw gave an example. Suppose, he said, the ground is uneven with slopes and ditches. You need to dig up the slopes and fill up the ditches with soil to make it even and smooth. If the ground is already even and smooth, you do not need to dig it up.

Regarding what and how to observe for *vipassana*, I have mentioned in the earlier talks a textual quote referring to Itivuttaka: “*bhūtam bhūtato passati*, one should observe what are happening as they really are.” In accordance with this quote, you have to observe the phenomena that are currently happening and can be directly experienced. By being aware of them, you can gain the insight knowledge through your direct experience. That is called empirical knowledge (*paccakkha-ñāna*). When this knowledge becomes mature, you can also realize all other phenomena by inference, whether they are past or future, internal or external. So there are two kinds of *vipassanā* knowledge: empirical knowledge (*paccakkha-vipassanā*) and inferential knowledge (*anumāna-vipassanā*).

For instance, when you observe rising and falling of the abdomen with aim and effort, you will come to know the phenomena involved through your own experience, such as stiffness, tension and so on. You, yourself, will also see them changing or disappearing every moment. This is the empirical knowledge. In order to gain such empirical knowledge (*paccakkha-ñāna*), stage by stage, until *magga-phala* enlightenment, all you have to do is to observe the present psycho-physical phenomena moment by moment.

If you are going to sit down from a standing position, for example, you should focus your attention on the whole body and observe the sitting process stage by stage. You may feel the body heavier and heavier. If you can keep your awareness on the sitting process with close attention and full effort, you

will come to know the physical phenomena involved, such as heaviness, stiffness, tension, and discomfort. You will also know the series of intentions to sit which are mental phenomena. Thus, you will come to know mind and body distinctly by noting the sitting. That is the insight called *nāma-rūpa-pariccheda-ñāna*, the insight distinguishing between mind and body. This is empirical knowledge (*paccakkha-ñāna*).

Discerning mind and body distinctly or knowing correctly what they really are, you will also realize their relation as cause and effect. This knowledge is called *yathābhūtā-nupassanā-ñāna*, knowing things as they really are. Then you will realize that there are only mental and physical phenomena without soul or creator involved. This knowledge will leave no room for wrong perception (*micchā-saññā*), and wrong view of soul (*micchā-ditthi*), and extreme delusion (*sammoha*).

With strong concentration, you will come to see the mental and physical phenomena arising at one moment and passing away the next moment. The series of intentions to sit and the actual sitting down, for example, arise one moment and pass away next moment. Thus, you will come to know their impermanence. The constant process of arising and passing away is kind of torture or suffering. That also means there is no soul nor creator. Thus, you will realize the three common characteristics (*sāmañña-lakkhana*): impermanence, suffering, and nonself. By knowing impermanence, you will know the other two spontaneously. Therefore, it is said that if you know one of the three characteristics, you will automatically know the other two, too. This is empirical knowledge.

Through such empirical knowledge, you will spontaneously realize, by inference or through deduction, all the phenomena in the past and future or in yourself or

in others. This is inferential knowledge (*anumāna-ñāna*). By observing present phenomena moment by moment you will gain the empirical knowledge (*paccakkha-ñāna*), which will automatically be followed by the inferential knowledge (*anumāna-ñāna*).

You should remember that the inferential knowledge is totally based on empirical knowledge. Without knowledge gained through direct experience, there cannot be knowledge by inference. Be careful not to confuse the inferential knowledge with intellectualization or speculations. Do not waste your time analyzing or reasoning; try your best to be aware of present phenomena moment by moment. If you happen to analyze, note it immediately. Thus, you will penetrate into the truth.

**Eight Preliminary Factors of the Noble Path:** Now, I will explain the preliminary factors of the Noble Path (*pubbabhāga-magganaga*). The effort (*vīriya*), mindfulness (*sati*) and concentration (*samādhi*) are involved in observing mental and physical phenomena moment by moment. These three factors are called the concentration group (*samādhi-kkhandā*), concentration training (*samādhi-sikkhā*), or concentration teaching (*samādhi-sāsana*). Having this *samādhi* group present, there will be no chance for defilements to arise. Thus, mind becomes pure and clean. Developing such a pure and clean mind over and over again is called “mental development practice” (*bhāvanā*), because this practice make the mind develop from small to big, from tender to ripe, from few to many. Other necessary factors of the practice is aiming your attention toward the meditative object (*sammā-samkappa*) and seeing things as they really are (*sammāditthi*). These two factors form into wisdom group (*paññākkhandā*).

When the concentration and wisdom groups are developed

in this way, your moral conduct is automatically pure. In other words, there arises the *sīla* group consisting of right speech, right action and right livelihood. This kind of *sīla* is not exactly the same as the normal kind of *sīla* refraining from misconducts, such as killing, stealing, etc. In fact, it is literally wholesome volition (*cetanā-sīla*). When this *sīla* group is developed in this way, along with concentration group and wisdom group, you fulfill three trainings: morality training (*sīlasikkhā*), concentration training (*samādhisikkhā*), and wisdom training (*paññāsikkhā*).

Altogether, there are eight preliminary factors of the Noble Path (*pubbabhāga-magganaga*) constituting the *vipassana* practice that reduces the mental defilements according to their forms. The morality group overcomes transgressive form of defilements; the concentration group the mentally active form; and the wisdom group the dormant form. Thus, you will be blameless, pure, clean, gentle, lovable, and peaceful.

Moreover, with effort, you can prevent laziness from arising. Thus, the path to wholesomeness is open. With mindfulness, you can guard and protect the mind from defilements. Then, there will be safety (*gutti*) and freedom (*vimutti*) from mental enemies; i.e., mental defilement. Thus, the mind will be calm and peaceful. This is momentary peace (*santi*). The accumulation of momentary peace will lead you to ultimate peace and happiness.

**For Mental Purification:** Actually, mental purification is what the Buddha has guaranteed in the *Satipatthāna Sutta*, thus: “*Ekāyano ayam bhikkhave maggo sattānam visuddhiyā yadidam cattāro Satipatthānā* = This is the sure way, monks, to purify living beings (of mental defilements), which is the four foundations of mindfulness.”

In order to purify the mind, one needs to develop four foundations of mindfulness: the mindfulness of body (*kāyā-nupassanā*), the mindfulness of sensation and feeling (*vedanā-nupassanā*), the mindfulness of mind or thought (*cittā-nupassanā*), and the mindfulness of the general objects, such as seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching (*dhammā-nupassanā*). In brief, all you have to do to purify your mind is to be aware of mental and physical phenomena that are currently arising moment by moment. As mentioned earlier, by fulfilling three trainings or, in other words, by noting continuously with aim and effort, your mind will become pure of mental impurities, such as craving, anger, and so on. This mindfulness meditation guarantees such mental purification. If one second of mindfulness means one moment of purification, there would be sixty moments of purification in one minute, and three thousand six hundred moments in one hour.

If you really value and cherish such great benefit of mindfulness practice, you should be mindful all the time whatever you are doing, sitting, standing, bending or stretching. The noting should be continuous without, any gaps in between. For example, this wooden floor is made of wooden planks fixed very tightly, leaving no gap in between, so that dirt cannot enter. In the same way, when mindfulness is very continuous, without any gap, defilements cannot enter the mind. So, with careful observation (*sakkacca-kiriyatā*) and continuous observation (*sātacca-kiriyatā*), you can make faster progress in the practice.

**Five Ways to Nurture the Vipassana:** Previously, I talked about five ways to nurture the *vipassanā* sapling so that it can grow, proliferate, and bear fruit with reference to the *Anguttara nikāya, Anuggahita Sutta*. To illustrate how to nurture the *vipassanā* sapling, I gave an example of a



gardener planting a mango seed who needs to take care of it in several ways. Here let me repeat it.

Like building a fence around the plant for protection, a yogi needs to protect the *vipassanā* sapling by practicing morality (*silā-nuggahita*). Like providing the plant with the appropriate amount of water, a yogi needs to learn the correct method of practice by listening to instructions, guidance and talks (*sutā-nuggahita*). Like cleaning weed under the plant, a yogi needs to discuss with his teacher how to make clear any confusion (*sācakchā-nuggahita*). Like preventing the pests from destroying the plant, a yogi needs to get rid of fatigue, weariness, and agitation in practice by absorbing into *samatha jhāna*. This is *samathā-nuggahita*. For a yogi who has no *jhāna*, he or she has to develop a stronger concentration on the present phenomena. Like cleaning all the impediments in a spider web, a yogi needs to make the insight stronger with further observation. At the certain level of insight knowledge, such as *udayabbaya-ñāna*, a yogi will experience a kind of unique and insatiable happiness along with strong concentration and mindfulness. And the yogi is likely to become attached to this stage knowingly or unknowingly. To prevent this attachment, yogi should strengthen the insight knowledge (*balava-vipassanā*) by noting the present phenomena with aim and effort. This is *vipassanā-nuggahita*. By nurturing the *vipassana* sapling in these ways, it will become mature stage by stage until it will bear fruits of *magga-phala* enlightenments.

**Three Things to Report:** Here, I would like to elaborate the discussion with one's teacher (*sācakchānuggahita*). In order to protect the *vipassanā* sapling by discussion, you should report in a simple and clear manner what you have experienced when you note the primary objects or secondary objects. There are three things to report: what

object occurs to you, how you note it and what you come to know or experience. For example, you may report thus: “When I breathe in, the abdomen rises. I noted it as rising. I experiences tension or tightness,” and so on. The same is true with falling, lifting, and so on. When reporting, you should start your report with noting the primary object before secondary ones.

For instance, if you look at something, you will know what it is. In the same way, when you note a meditative object, you will come to know what it is in terms of its true nature. You should report it in a short, precise, and clear way. You should explain the quality of your practice, whether you can note an object with full attention and precise mindfulness. If you are able to do so, you should report what you come to know. Did you see form or shape of the abdomen, or its mode or manner of moving, or its true nature, such as stiffness, tension, warmth, cold, heat, movement, and so on? These are how or what you should report.

If you are not able to note properly and the mind is wandering somewhere else, you should report it, too. You should describe exactly what the problem is with your practice. If you can note one object after another continuously with aim and effort, there will be less wandering. Even though the wandering arises, you will know it right away. You can gain control over your mind by noting the presently arising objects with aim and effort.

For example, if the parents cannot take care of their child properly, then the child may hang around with gangsters and may later become a gangster. In the same way, the mind naturally goes to desirable objects and is associated with lust or hatred. You should take care of your mind by noting the presently arising object with aim and effort so that the mind will not wander or go astray. If you find your mind

associated with evil thoughts, you should note it as soon as you notice it, so that they stop right away. It is what is called *cittā-nupassanā*, contemplation on the mind. This is explained in the text as: “The moment the thought arises it should be noted as it is” (*yasmim yasmim khane*).

Actually, whether a thought is polluted or pure, once it is obvious, you should note it right away. It is *cittānupassanā*. Noting wandering thoughts is also *cittā-nupassanā*. And, at times, there may be sensations in your body, such as itchiness, and so on. By noting this itch, it will be *vedanānupassanā*, contemplation of feeling or sensation. And when other activity arises in the body, you can leave the primary object for the secondary one. It is called *dhammānupassanā*. What you should note is the object that is most prominent, most obvious at the moment. The body (physical phenomena) is the most obvious object to note. Remember the *vipassana* formula: “*Yathāpākatam vipassanābhiviveso* = whatever is obvious, vipassana is focused on that.”

When noting a wandering thought, does it stop or go on? You should report it in interview. And when noting itchiness, did it increase, decrease, move, or dissolve? You should report what happened to the itchiness. Then, the meditation teacher will give you an advice on what to do with it. If there is something wrong, the teacher will correct it. If there is something excessive, the teacher will ask you to reduce it. If there is no need for correction, the teacher will ask you to continue your practice.

In order for the meditation teachers to give you necessary and suitable guidance, you should explain these three things: what object occurs to you, how you note it, and what you come to know about it. If your report is based on your imagination or thoughts, but not on your own experience, then your report will not make any sense.

**What *Sutta* Means:** When practicing *Satipatthana* meditation, you should follow a reliable guidance and instruction given according to the text so that your practice will be promising. A carpenter, for example, should use a measurement string in order to measure what part of wood to cut, what part to keep. If the carpenter just cuts the wood without using the measurement string, he is most likely to cut the wrong part or too much or too little of the wood. So, for the right cut, the measuring tape is necessary. For another example, if a child not skilled in writing writes on plain paper without lines, his or her writing cannot go straight but crooked. So, lines on the paper are very helpful for neat and tidy writing. In the same way, for a yogi to be able to go straight on the noble path, he or she should follow '*sutta*' (discourses from *Pāli* texts) that literally means measurement string or line.

**Untamed Mind:** Naturally, the body is more obvious than the mind. *Pāli* texts explicitly say you should note the more obvious object rather than the less obvious. Remember the *vipassanā* formula: "Whatever is obvious, *vipassanā* is focused on that." The body is gross, obvious, and easily noticeable. In the *Dhammapada*, it is said that the mind is very difficult to notice (*sududdasam*), very subtle or delicate (*sunipunam*), and wandering wherever it wants (*yatthakāma-nipātinam*). People rarely notice when or where their mind wanders. Their minds go anywhere without control. When it goes to desirable objects, it will associate with lust; when it goes to undesirable objects, it will associate with anger, hatred or aversion. Even if lust and anger do not arise, the mind is simply deluded, dim, and vague. It is really like a wild animal in the forest. Unless you tame it with mindfulness, it will go that way forever.

**Where to Focus to Note the Mind:** In order to be aware of the mind, you should focus where the mind is arising. There are six bases for the mind can arise: eye-base, ear-base, nose-base, tongue-base, body-base, and heart-base. Seeing consciousness takes place on the eye base. When the visible object strikes the eye-base, seeing consciousness takes place on it. In the same way, hearing consciousness takes place on the ear-base, smelling consciousness on the nose-base, tasting consciousness on the tongue-base, and touching consciousness on the body-base. The last one is the knowing consciousness. According to the Western idea, it takes place in the brain, but the Eastern idea says it takes place on the heart-base (*hadaya-vatthu*). Most of the consciousness takes place in the heart, which is the center of the blood circulation. So, to note the mind, you should focus your attention on the heart area. The Buddha did not mention where the heart base is.

Seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching are the resultant mental states, neither wholesome nor unwholesome. Seeing bad things is the result of bad *kamma*; seeing good things the result of good *kamma*. The same is true with hearing, etc. You should be mindful of them the moment they take place, so that they will stop right there (i.e., at the moment of resultant state), leaving no room for lust or anger. Thus, the mind will be guarded, and protected from defilements. The *Dhammapada* verse says: “The mind being guarded will bring you happiness” (*cittam guttam sukhāvaham*). That is why it is important to tame the mind by being mindful of it.

Actually, it is almost impossible to note the seeing consciousness individually, because the seeing involves many other mental factors, such as the mental factor that contacts the mind to the visible object (*phassa*), the mental factor that feels sensation pleasant, unpleasant or neutral

(*vedanā*) and the mental factor that remembers the object (*saññā*), and so on. It also involves physical phenomena, such as eye sensitivity (i.e., the eye-base (*cakkhu-vatthu*)), and visible form (*rūpārammana*). So, when a visible form obviously strikes the healthy eye-base, the seeing consciousness definitely takes place. Thus, seeing involves both mental and physical phenomena. You cannot note the seeing consciousness separately from the rest. Therefore, you should be aware of them all as a whole at the moment of seeing by noting as “*seeing, seeing*” according to the *sutta*, without analyzing them according to *abhidhamma*.

If you note the seeing the moment you see, you will be able to experience phenomena involved in terms of their individual and common characteristics. The same is true with the rest senses, such as hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, and knowing. At the beginning of the practice, however, it will be difficult for a yogi to note that many objects. A beginner should start his or her practice with objects easy and obvious, like lessons a child starts in the school. And Buddha gave in-and-out breath (*ānāpāna*) for the mind to anchor. The rising and falling of the abdomen should be treated similarly. When you start the walking meditation, you are asked to make one note for one step, “right” or “left” accordingly; later two notes, “lifting, placing”; then three notes, “lifting, moving and placing.” In this way, you can increase the meditative objects gradually. Thus, you can make faster progress in the practice.

**Desire-related Mind:** You should understand the right time to practice the awareness of the mind *cittā-nupassanā*. While noting the rising, falling, etc., at times desire, greed or lust may arise if the mind goes to desirable objects, such as beautiful sights, sweet sounds, fragrant smell, delicious food, and so on. When you get what you desire, there will grow

attachment. Such a desire-related mind is called *sarāga-citta*. You should note it as soon as you notice it. Then it may disappear right away or otherwise you should keep on noting it until it disappears. When it dissolves, it should be known to your mindfulness, too. It is how to develop the awareness of mind according to the *Satipatthāna Sutta* which says: “Be aware of the desire-related mind as desire-related mind. Be aware of desire-free mind as desire-free mind” (*sarāgam vā cittam sarāga-cittamti pajānāti; vītarāgam vā cittam vītarāga-cittanti pajānāti*). You should practice according to what the Buddha taught, but not according to what you think right.

Suppose, for example, if there is a place where contagious diseases are breaking out, you can avoid going to such place. However, it is impossible for you to avoid the lustful mind unless you are an *arahat*. So, prevention is the best thing to practice. To prevent the desire-related mind from arising, you should note the presently arising object with aim (full attention) and effort. Then, there would be no chance for this mind to arise. It is just like preventing fire before breaking out. When the fire breaks out, you should extinguish it right away. When you are afflicted with some kind of disease, you should cure it right away. In the same way, you should prevent lustful mind from arising and, if it arises, you should cure it right away by being mindful of it.

When the yogi is able to note the primary object or prominent secondary objects with full attention (aiming) and effort, it is not necessary to make an attempt to contemplate on the mind for the development of *cittā-nupassanā*. But, when you find the mind wanders or associated with lust or anger, it is necessary to be aware of it to develop *cittā-nupassanā*, but not otherwise.

**Desire-free Mind:** Regarding the awareness of mind, the Buddha said to be aware of the desire-free mind (*sarāga-citta*) as it is. This desire-free mind generally refers to the 81 kinds of mind, including supramundane minds. As I mentioned in an earlier talk, the supramundane mind cannot be counted as a meditative object. So, for a desire-free mind, we should take mundane wholesome mind (*kāmāvacarakusala*) and indeterminate minds (*abyākata*) that replace the desire-related mind, since the moment the mind gets free from desire, it becomes clean and pure. That is why the commentary says that mundane wholesome minds and indeterminate minds should be taken as the desire-free minds (*vīta-rāga-citta*). Anyway, what is important is to be aware of the desire-free mind when it takes place in the place the desire-related mind. More importantly, you should be aware of the desire-related mind the moment it arises, so that you can overcome mental impurities. This is the awareness of mind (*cittānupassanā*).

**Anger-related and Anger-free Minds:** Hatred or anger is the opposite of joy and happiness. When hatred arises, you want to hurt or destroy others. So, anger, hatred, dissatisfaction, etc., are called anger-related mind (*sadosa-citta*). When the mind is free from such cruel *dosa*, it becomes clean and beautiful. In daily life, if you are not mindful, undesirable objects will make you angry, sad, or dissatisfied. Whenever such *dosa* mind arises, you should note it as soon as you notice it. When you feel dissatisfied, note it as dissatisfied. When you have hatred, note it as hatred. When you have aversion, note it as aversion. When you are angry, note it as angry. They may go away after one or two notes or you need to keep on noting until they disappear. Then, the pure and clean mind arises in their place. You should note such anger-free mind, too. So the Buddha said in the Satipatthāna Sutta



thus: “*Sadosam vā cittam sa-dosa-cittanti pajānāti. Vīta-dosam vā cittam vīta-dosa-cittanti pajānāti.*” (Be aware of *dosa*-related mind as *dosa*-related mind; be aware of *dosa*-free mind as *dosa*-free mind.)

Polluted minds are just like illness and fire. You should prevent the illness before it arises. And when it arises, you should cure it right away. Similarly, you should prevent fire from breaking out. If it breaks out, you should extinguish it right away. To prevent mental defilements from arising, you have to note the presently arising objects with aim (full attention), effort, mindfulness, and concentration. And when these defilements arise, you should cure them right away by noting them as soon as you can. Anyway, prevention is always better than cure.

**Deluded Minds:** Ignorance of the truth always brings you doubt, uncertainty and confusion. Such deluded mind is called “*moha*” or “*sammoha*.” It is of two kinds: confusion-related and agitation-related. Unless you note mental and physical phenomena with aiming (full attention) and effort, you can never see their true nature. Then, the mind will be always deluded with doubt, confusion, and uncertainty (*vicikicchā-sampayutta*) and agitation and regret (*uddhacca-kukkucca-sampayutta*). Thus, you cannot be tranquil and peaceful. Such kind of a deluded mind is called “*sammoha-citta*.”

Suppose, for example, if you were to have one delusion per second, then there would be sixty delusions per minute. In five minutes, there would be three hundred; in one hour, three thousand six hundred. Thus, the layer of delusion is piling up thicker and thicker as long as you have no mindfulness. Such thick layer of delusion is called *moha-patala*. This delusion can also be compared to a cataract in the eye. If the layer of cataract is thin, one can still see something, at

least vaguely. If the layer of cataract is very thick, one will become even blind. In the same way, if one is entangled and covered with thick layers of delusion (*sammoha-byākinna*), one would become blind and could not see the truth. The Buddha is honored as *sālākiya*, the eye surgeon, because he taught us how to remove the cataract of delusion. To remove the delusion cataract, you must practice by being mindful of the presently arising phenomena.

**To Elaborate the Deluded Mind:** This deluded mind is associated with many unwholesome mental elements, sometimes with desire (*lobha*), ego-belief (*ditthi*) and conceit (*māna*), and other times with anger (*dosa*), ill will (*issā*), jealousy (*macchariya*), agitation (*uddhacca*), regret (*kukkucca*). Before mindfulness is mature, you happen to think about sensual pleasure even during the intensive practice. Sometimes you may feel proud of yourself or your achievements. You may even take pride in your practice. And ego-belief also accompanies the deluded mind when you think “I am so and so person.”

Regarding the deluded mind associated with *dosa*, there are two forms of *dosa*: The active form, such as anger, hatred, aversion, etc. and passive form, such as fear, sorrow, grief, etc. During the intensive retreat, you may feel worried that long sitting may cause damage to the blood circulation resulting in illness or a stroke. And, at times, you may have an aversion against something or someone or the tight schedule of the retreat. And at times, you may feel envy, jealousy, remorse, or regret. This is how unwholesome factors accompany the deluded mind. To overcome these defilements, all you have to do is to note with aim and effort the presently arising thoughts. That is *citta-nupassana*.

**Two Kinds of Soul:** The Hindu text mentions the two kinds of soul (*atta*): personal soul (*jīva-atta*) and universal

soul (*parama-atta*). Among these two, the universal soul is believed to create, govern, and control the whole world and knows everything. And it is also described as one only with no definite form or shape and with no happiness or unhappiness. And the individual soul is described as existing in every individual being with different individual size. For example, the soul of an ant would be very small and that of an elephant would be very big. And it is also believed to have control over our senses and actions such as seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, bending, stretching, turning, and so on. It is believed that, when a being dies, the body perishes, but the soul moves on to another body. Based on greed, they are doing things in order to keep their souls well and happy. Such a wrong view accompanies the deluded mind.

The commentaries say that there are eight kinds of desire-related mind (*sa-rāga-citta*), two kinds of anger-related mind (*sa-dosa-citta*) and twelve kinds of delusion-related mind (*sam-moha-citta*). However, you can only note one mind at a time, not two or more at the same time. And this noting is *citta-nupassana*.

**Three Kinds of Knowledge:** There are three kinds of knowledge: one gained from learning (*suta-maya-ñāna*), one from logical thinking (*cintā-maya-ñāna*), and one from practice (*bhāvanā-maya-ñāna*). The first two have nothing to do with the awareness of the mind. For having the knowledge gained from practice (*bhāvanā-maya-ñāna*), you must practice *vipassana* by observing the mind the moment it becomes obvious. Only then can you be aware of the true nature of mind. That is the awareness of mind (*cittā-nupassanā*).

**Knowledge Gained from Practice:** For a meditator, it is good to know the meaning of the word *abhiññāta*, that is

made up of two parts: *abhi* (through exceptional knowledge) and *ñāta* (things to be known). So, here “*ñāta*” refers to ultimate reality (i.e., mundane kinds of psycho-physical phenomena), and “*abhi*” to the knowledge gained from practice. By noting the rising of the abdomen, for example, you will come to know the true nature of physical phenomena involved, such as stiffness, tension, and movement. This is exceptional knowledge. If you note sitting down from the standing position, you will know the series of intentions to sit (mind) and the actual sitting down (body). Thus, you will know distinctly between mind and body. Later, you will come to know their interaction and their common characteristic (*sāmañña-lakkhana*), (i.e., impermanence, suffering and non-self). Thus, you develop *vipassana* insight step by step until the attainment of *magga-phala* enlightenment. All these *vipassana* insights are called exceptional knowledge gained from own experience and excel other kinds of knowledge, gained from learning, logical thinking or even *jhāna* absorption.

**Awareness of Deluded and Undeluded Mind:** When you find your mind associating with desire or anger, note it as it is right away. Regarding delusion, if you fail to note the phenomena occurring to you, you will become ignorant of their true nature. Then your mind is associating with ignorance or delusion (*sam-moha-citta*). You should be aware of that. When you are able to note the present objects moment by moment, you will come to know their true nature. Then your mind gets free from delusion (*vīta-moha-citta*). You should be aware of that, too. In brief, all you have to do is to note present phenomena moment by moment without thinking or imagining. The *Pāli* text say: “*Yasmim yasmim khane yam yam cittam pavattati tam tam sallakkhanto...*, Whatever moment, whatever mind takes place, be aware of

it in terms of its true characteristic.”

**Factors of Spiritual Attainment:** If you can note present objects moment by moment, the mind will become pure of those unwholesome mental states, such as greed, hatred, and delusion. Then, although profound (*gambhīra*), the *dhamma* will become prominent to you (*supākata*). It is so, because your mind is pure of the negative mental states (*patipakkhavigamanena*). Therefore, in order to have mental purity, you must practice correctly by noting present phenomena moment by moment (*sammā-patipattipada*). For correct practice, you listen to *dhamma* talks and guidance (*sadhammasavanādhina*) then with faith and confidence in the Buddha and his teachings (*satthari dhamme ca pasādāyattam*) you put guidance into practice. These are necessary factors of the attainment of *dhamma*.

**Awareness of Contracted Mind:** It is the Buddha who discovered this method to develop the mind and knowledge and passed it down to us. On his behalf, we meditation teachers are sharing it with you. One should have faith and confidence in it and its benefits, such as purification of the mind, and so on. Such faith and confidence in the Buddha and his teaching will make you zealous in the practice. Then you will have courage to face physical pains, to endure lesser sleeping hours, to note the present objects moment by moment. Otherwise, the mind will become contracted, not opened or not blossomed, not fresh, not alert. Then, you may want to withdraw from the practice. That is sloth (*thina*) and torpor (*middha*). Such lazy mental states are called *samkhitta-citta*, contracted mind or lazy mind. Beginning yogis often encounters it. You should note it right away as soon as you notice it.

**Awareness of Scattered Mind:** Some yogis have faith and confidence in the practice and strong will to get its

benefits. They are likely to be excessively eager by asserting excessive effort in the practice. Then the noting mind overshoots the object. Their minds scatter as if thrown far. Such scattered or restless mind is called *vikkhitta*. In this case, you need to fine tune so that the noting mind will be concurrent with the object. Only then will there be balance of these mental states. The noting mind will fall onto the object. If the mind gets distracted, restless or dispersed, one should note it right away, and this is *cittānupassanā*.

**Lazy People:** The Buddha instructed us to practice without laziness (*a-tandito*). Here, *tandi* is a synonymous with *thina-middha* (sloth and torpor). For a yogi, the laziness is the nearest internal enemy that is ruining the practice. In order to fight and dispel this enemy, you should try your best to be aware of the laziness itself or whatever is obvious at the present moment with aim and effort. Aiming the mind towards the object (*vitakka*) makes the contracted mind open, blossom, and alert. Buddha said thus: “*Līnam cittaṃ kosajjā-nupatitam*”, inactive mind leads to laziness. A lazy person is called *kusīta* (disgusting person), because his behaviors are disgusting. He is also defined as someone to be sworn at, because a lazy person is a useless person. Laziness or the behaviors of a lazy person are called *kosajja*.

The Buddha said that a lazy person has to live a miserable life (*kusīto bhikkhave dukkham viharati*), because he is entangled with unwholesome mental states (*vokinno pāpakehi akusalehi dhammehi*). A lazy person having no mindfulness and knowledge can rarely feel content and peaceful in life, because of an insatiable desire (*kāma-vitakka*) to see beautiful things, to hear sweet sounds, and so on. He who is hatred or jealousy and thinks about killing (*byāpāda-vitakka*) or hurting others (*vihimsa-vitakka*) can be hardly happy. In this way, he has to live a miserable life.

He may end up having social problems that are difficult to solve. That is why the Buddha said thus: “He (a lazy one) loses great amount of benefits (*mahantañsa sadattham parihāpeti*).”

**Three Stages of Effort:** The true benefit gained from the practice is the purification of body, speech, and mind. In order to remove impurities, you need to make three stages of effort in the practice. They are start-up effort, boost-up effort, and culminating effort in three trainings, such as morality, concentration, and wisdom. Lazy people often complain about intensive practice and may leave the center before the retreat is over. Thus, they would lose the great benefit available from the retreat. If you do not practice *Satipathāna* meditation, you will not really understand what is beneficial or what is not beneficial and what is suitable or what is not suitable for oneself and others. If you have such understanding, you would make less or no mistakes.

Having a strong determination to uplift quality of life, you are here at this Meditation center. Therefore, you should put three stages of heroic effort in the practice: ardent effort (*āradha-vīriya*), persistent effort (*paggahita-vīriya*), fully developed effort (*paripunna-vīriya*); or in other words, start-up effort (*ārambha-dhātu*), boost-up effort (*nikkamma-dhātu*), and culminating effort (*parakkama-dhātu*). Like launching a satellite all the way into the orbit where there is no gravity, you should with these efforts practice all the way until you can free yourself from the gravity of defilements.

From practical aspect, all you have to do is to try your best to be aware of obvious objects arising at present moment. Your chosen primary objects are the rising and falling of the abdomen during sitting and the movements of feet during walking. When you note the rising, for example, you should try your best to be aware of the phenomena involved in it

from the beginning to the end of the rising. The same is true with the feet during walking. By exerting ardent effort, you can develop mindfulness and momentary concentration (*khanika-samādhi*). These three factors of effort, mindfulness, and concentration are called the concentration-led group (*samādhi-kkhandā*), which enables you to see the truth and to purify your mind of mental defilements.

**Awareness of Tranquil Mind:** With these three factors, your mind will be calm and serene. It is well established on the meditative objects making you feel satisfied with the practice and experiences. Then you will experience joy (*pīti*) and happiness (*sukha*). That is why the Buddha said: “*Pavivitto pāpakehi akusalehi dhammehi*, being secluded from the unwholesomeness one gains joy and happiness.” And such joy and happiness is called the seclusion-related happiness (*paviveka-sukha*). Such calm and serene mental state is called *samāhita-citta*. Be aware of it as it is.

**Awareness of Restless Mind:** Without these three factors (effort, mindfulness, and concentration), your mind is unstable and restless. Sometimes, you may feel very excited to gain the benefits of practice and happen to exert excessive effort. Then the noting mind will scatter and slip away from the meditative objects. That is why it is said that too much eagerness results in restlessness (*atipaggahitam cittam uddhaccā-nupatitam*). Such a mental state is called *a-samāhita-citta*. Be aware of it as it is. It is *cittā-nupassanā*, according to the teaching of the Buddha.

**Awareness of Liberated Mind and Unliberated Mind:** The last pair of mental states to observe is *vimutta-citta* and *a-vimutta-citta*, or the mind that is liberated from mental defilements and the mind that is not, respectively. As a yogi in the Meditation center, you are secluded from family and friends (*kāya-viveka*). But if you are thinking of sensual



pleasure or worldly affair, you are not mentally secluded yet (*citta-viveka*). So, you should try your best to be secluded both physically and mentally by noting the objects obvious at present moment. The moment your mind is secluded or liberated from mental defilements, it is called liberated mind (*vimutta-citta*). Be aware of it as it is. When the mind is associated with companions of mental defilement, it is called unliberated mind (*a-vimutta-citta*). Be aware of it as it is. This is *cittā-nupassanā*.

**Five Kinds of Liberation:** In the text, the liberation consists of five categories: momentary liberation (*tadaṅga-vimutta*), lasting liberation (*vikkhambhana-vimutta*), complete liberation (*samuccheda-vimutta*), peaceful liberation (*patipassaddhi-vimutta*), and ultimate liberation (*nissarana-vimutta*). As for awareness of mind (*cittā-nupassanā*), you can observe only the first two because the third one refers to *magga*-enlightenment and the fourth to *phala*-enlightenment, and the last to *nibbāna*.

The momentary liberation takes place when your mind is momentarily liberated from mental defilements as you note meditative objects with effort, mindfulness and concentration. And, when your practice gains momentum, your mind is kept away from the gross form of mental defilements for long. Even though you take a break in practice for some time, your mind does not get interfered with the defilements. Such long-lasting liberation is called *vikkhambhana-vimutta*, or lasting liberation. Lacking these two kinds of liberation, the mind is called “*a-vimutta-citta*,” unliberated mind.

**Single Mind or Secluded Mind:** In order to be aware of the present objects moment by moment, the Buddha said that one should have a single mind (*eka-citta*). What is meant by “a single mind?” It is the mind that is protected by mindfulness (*satā-rakkhena cetasā samannāgato*). By being aware of

whatever object obvious, you develop mindfulness, which protects your mind from wandering thoughts. Such mind is called “a single mind” or “secluded mind.” From a practical aspect, all you need to do is to note any object obvious at the present moment, like seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, rising or falling of the abdomen, and blinking, opening or closing the eyes, and so on. Thus, mindfulness takes place protecting the mind from hindrances.

**Characteristic of Mindfulness:** It is good to know the description of the mindfulness in terms of its characteristic, function, manifestation, and proximate cause. Its characteristic is *a-pilāpana-lakkhanā*, not to float (on the surface of the object). It means that mindfulness penetrates deep into the aware object. If you throw a cork into the water, for example, it will float on the surface, whereas a rock will sink into the water. In the same way, the mindfulness will sink into the aware object. To explain from a practical aspect, if you note an object with aim and effort, the mind will sink into the object and experiences the phenomena involved. You should have your awareness deep enough to experience the phenomena involved in the meditative objects. This is the characteristic of the mindfulness.

**Function of the Mindfulness:** The function of mindfulness is not to forget or not to lose the sight of the object (*asammosa-rasā*). Every moment different phenomena are arising; therefore, mindfulness should be continuous to aware of them. By being aware of one object after another, you can sustain mindfulness; you will not lose sight of the object. Suppose, you are doing research, you should try your best not to lose sight of what you are observing. In the same way, you should note one object after another, so that you will not lose sight of the object. That is the function of the mindfulness.

**Manifestation of Mindfulness:** The mindfulness manifests itself as facing towards the sense-objects (*visayā-bhimukhībhāva-paccupatthānā*). For example, if you want to take a look at the Buddha's image, you should face towards the image. Your attention should go face to face with the Buddha's image, so as to see it. In the same way, the mindfulness goes face to face with the object. In the case of *vipassana* practice, the noting mind should be face to face with the meditative object, so that it can be concurrent with the object. The mindfulness also manifests itself in protecting the mind from mental defilements (*ārakkha-paccupatthānā*). Thus, if you can note objects obvious at the present moment, the mindfulness will take place leaving no room for mental defilements. Thus, the mindfulness protects the mind from defilements (*rakkha*); it prevents the defilements from arising (*āvarana*); it keeps the mind secure against the defilements (*gutti*). This is how the mindfulness manifests itself in practice.

**The Proximate Cause of Mindfulness:** The proximate cause of mindfulness is accurate perception of the sense-objects (*thira-saññā-padatthāna*). Just as a recorded document always contributes to our knowledge, accurate perception is always contributing to the mindfulness. When you note meditative objects, you should note them precisely and accurately so that mindfulness will arise.

According to its manifestation, the mindfulness makes the mind secure against the mental defilements. That is called mental security (*gutti*). Where there is mental security (*gutti*), there is liberation (*mutti*). Every moment the mindfulness takes place, the liberation will take place. Such liberation is called temporary liberation (*tadaṅga-vimutti*). If you develop mindfulness for one moment, you can gain liberation for one moment. And so, the more mindfulness

you can develop, the longer liberation you can experience.

If one country intrudes into another, for example, they may not be able to occupy the whole country at once. They have to occupy one division after another. Another example is when an empty bottle is filled up with water drop by drop, every drop of water replaces the same amount of air inside the bottle. In the same way, every moment of mindfulness will replace the same amount of mental defilements. Thus, mental defilements reduce bit by bit until they are totally eradicated.

**Please Practice Properly:** I feel very glad when I see some yogis practicing properly. But I still see some other yogis not practicing properly, looking here and there with the hands searching something in the pockets while doing the walking meditation. When I see them, I feel really sad.

Without practicing properly, you will not gain any benefit or any knowledge, although you may spend one or two months in retreat. If you waste your time analyzing what it is, why it is, how it is, whether it is physical or mental phenomenon rather than noting the present object, your mind cannot be free from defilements.

Only when you practice properly and gain benefits, can you strengthen your faith and confidence in the practice, in the Buddha, and in the noble people who have practiced the same way as you are doing. Such faith and confidence will be subsequently accompanied by a strong will to make an heroic effort in the practice of developing stronger mindfulness, concentration and *vipassana* insights stage by stage. By noting objects moment by moment, the mind will be liberated from defilements moment by moment. Over time, the liberation will get longer and stronger. For example, a strong rope is made up of many fibers. The individual

fibers are very weak and very fragile. However, when many fibers are entwined together, the rope will become amazingly strong. In the same way, a single noting, a single moment of liberation will not be strong, but many continuous moments of liberation will be amazingly strong.

**Precious Gift:** In worldly life, relatives and friends give each other precious gifts to show their love. When you are given a precious gift, you are supposed to accept it wholeheartedly, not half-heartedly, so that the giver will feel glad and satisfied. And, after having received the gift, you should not just keep it in the corner but make proper use of it instead. Only when the recipient makes use of the gift, will it be worthy of giving the gift. Different gifts will have different use. For instance, some need to be used immediately, others regularly, some need to be kept as a souvenir in the living room. But the *dhamma* gift is not like that. If you are given a *dhamma* gift, you should make use of it immediately and regularly. A worldly gift will become worn out when it is used up. For the *dhamma* gift, however, the more you make use of it, the more precious and valuable it will become.

We meditation teachers make sure you are really making use of the *dhamma* gift we have given to you. Occasionally, we give you encouragement if needed. But when your practice gains momentum, you need no more encouragement. You will keep on practicing without much difficulty. If you make great use of our *dhamma* gift, you would leave impression on our memory for life.

**Dry Out Kelesa Moisture:** Unless you have mindfulness, your mind will be polluted with greed or craving when it meets desirable objects or anger and hatred in the case of undesirable objects. Thus, your mind is polluted, wet and damp with moisture of mental defilements (*kilesa*). If clothing is wet and damp, for instance, it will be heavy. In

the same way, if wet with *kilesa* moisture, the mind will be heavy and damp. To dry the *kilesa* moisture, you need to develop *ātāpa*, ardent effort or burning energy with firm determination thus: “Let only skin, sinews and bones remain. Let my flesh and blood dry up. I will not give up until I attain what I should attain.” Actually, although you may have such a heroic determination to sacrifice your life and limbs for the spiritual attainment, there has been no case of death during the practice. Anyway, you should be courageous, and you should not be afraid of pain or illness during practice as a saying goes, “No pains no gains.”

**Bhikkhu:** Everyone likes happiness (*sukha-kāmā*) and nobody likes suffering (*dukkha-patikūlā*). It is a human nature. So, we should try our best to avoid suffering and to gain real happiness. *Satipatthāna* meditation promises such happiness. The Buddha himself practiced this meditation and attained omniscient knowledge (*sabbāññuta-ñāna*) and then taught us this method out of great compassion, so that we can overcome suffering and gain real happiness. The mental defilements are responsible for one hundred percent of our suffering. They make us live miserable lives at present and also to suffer from their bad consequences in the life after death. Someone who sees such horrible flaws of mental defilements and practice ardently to get rid of them is called ‘bhikkhu’ (*Samsāre bayam ikkhatīti bhikkhu*). Life is an endless process of mind and matter (*samsāra*). Seeing many things awful about the *samsāra*, one tries his or her best to escape from it by eradicating its root-cause (i.e., mental defilements). Such a person is called “*bhikkhu*.” This is another definition of *bhikkhu* (*kilese bhindaīti bhikkhu*).

In order to eradicate the mental defilements, the Buddha explained in the *Satipatthāna Sutta* how one should practice starting, thus: “A *bhikkhu* lives in this Holy Order observing

body in the case of body, etc.” (*idha bhikkhave bhikkhu kāye kāyā-nupassī viharati*). In view of this, some may think that the Buddha mentioned *bhikkhu* as someone who is supposed to practice, but not us. During the Buddha's time, there were four kinds of audiences: monks (*bhikkhu*), nuns (*bhikkhunī*), male devotees (*upāsaka*), and female devotees (*upāsikā*). But nowadays in Theravada we have no more *bhikkhunī*; but in Mahayana tradition, they still have. The Buddha addressed his audience “*bhikkhu*” almost every time he gave *dhamma* talks, because the monks were the main audience listening to the discourse. Actually, the Buddha gave this discourse not only to monks but also to nuns and lay devotees. Nowadays, the number of lay devotees who practice the *satipatthāna* meditation even exceeds that of the monks. Actually, according to the definitions of “*bhikkhu*” as mentioned above, anyone can be called *bhikkhu*, if he or she practices *satipatthāna* meditation as to abandon the mental defilements. On the other hand, nobody can be called a “*bhikkhu*” unless he or she practices, even though he or she may wear the saffron robes.

**Remove the Cause but not the Effect:** In reality, what we have to remove is not suffering, but its cause. In life, it is really painful that things always go against our will. We want to stay young but we grow old; we want to stay healthy, but we get ill; we want to live forever, but we die. Moreover, from time to time, we suffer grief, sorrow, lamentation, and physical pain. Actually, it is the birth itself that is subject to old age, disease, and death. What is the cause of the birth? Good and bad deeds done with delusion and craving for life. Not knowing the defects of the life is ignorance or delusion that makes us attached to life and makes us do good or bad deeds for the sake of life. So, the root-cause of birth is the mental defilements led by delusion and attachment. We

cannot see the truth through the delusion like a cataract in our eyes prevents us from seeing things correctly or clearly. Without seeing the truth, there is no way for us to get rid of those mental defilements, the root-cause of suffering. This practice of the four foundations of mindfulness is the sure way for us to see the truth.

This *Satipatthāna* meditation can be compared to driving a car with a good steering wheel and brakes. Without a good steering wheel and brakes, a driver cannot have control over the car, and it will go off the road sooner or later. Then he or she will definitely get into a severe accident. In the same way, mindfulness is a steering wheel and brakes in life which will protect us from hurting ourselves and others.

As I mentioned previously, anybody who practices the teaching of the Buddha (i.e., *satipatthāna* meditation) can be considered as a *bhikkhu* as well as a yogi. *Bhikkhu* and yogi are, therefore, different in words but the same in essence. Now, I would like to explain the meaning of the word “*yogi*” according to the teaching of the Buddha.

**The Definition of ‘Yogi’:** To cultivate mindfulness, one of the necessary factors is ardent effort (*vīriya*) which is also called “*yoga*.” The possessor of “*yoga*” is called “*yogī*,” that literally means the one who puts great effort in the practice in order to develop one’s mind and knowledge (*bhāvanāya*).

Practicing *Satipatthāna* meditation is not only for the Buddhists but everyone else. As a human, we have responsibility to protect others and ourselves from being hurt physically or mentally, by refraining from what should be refrained. And, also, we have a responsibility to perform what should be performed, so that we can bring benefits to others and ourselves. To carry out our responsibilities, the



mindfulness (*sati*), which is also called vigilance (*appamāda*), is necessary. So we should have mindfulness or vigilance to do good and to avoid evil.

The high-level mindfulness is to be mindful of whatever activity you do (*kāyā-nupassanā*), of whatever sensation you feel (*vedanā-nupassanā*), of whatever thought you have (*cittā-nupassanā*), and of whatever you see, hear, etc. (*dhammā-nupassanā*). In this case, courage (*vīriya*) or effort (*yoga*) is necessary to avoid evil and to do good. If you own such courage and effort, you are regarded as ‘yogi’ (*bhāvanāya yutta-payuttatāya yogī*). You should check yourselves whether you are worthy of the title of “yogi” according to the definition mentioned in the text. If you check, you must be honest without exaggerating the quality of your practice and without minimizing your defects and weakness. From a practical point of view, however, all you have to do is to be aware of the home object, such as rising and falling of the abdomen or the most prominent present phenomenon.

**Why to Observe Rising and Falling of the Abdomen:** There are four kinds of objects to note in the *Satipatthāna* meditation: body, sensation, thoughts, and general objects, such as seeing, hearing, etc. Among these four meditative objects, whatever is obvious should be noted as they really are (*Bhūtam bhūtato passati*). For a beginner, however, the body (physical phenomena) is the most obvious among others. Again, among the physical phenomena, the air element is the most obvious. According to the *vipassana* formula “whatever is obvious, *vipassana* is focused on that” (*yathā pākatam vipassanābhiniveso*). We should start our practice observing the air element, which is more prominent than any others. That is why you are instructed to note rising and falling of the abdomen as a primary object where the air element

is prevail. You can experience the air element involved in the rising and falling in terms of its characteristics, such as stiffness, tension, pressure, and movement, etc.

**Pleasure Beyond the Human:** Sensual pleasures are enjoyable not only to worldly people (*putthujjanas*) but also to animals (*tiricchāna*) who have thick layers of mental defilements. Such pleasures, being associated with mental defilements, are called ignoble pleasures (*anariya-sukha*), which have no guarantee and are often dangerous and fatal. In order to gain the happiness that has a guarantee, you need to renounce such fatal sensual pleasures. Coming into retreat, leaving the worldly pleasure behind, being secluded from family and friends and having the mind away from mental defilements, you can enjoy the pleasure of seclusion (*paviveka-sukha*) and pleasure of tranquility (*upasama-sukha*). You can start to experience such *dhamma* pleasure at the fourth level of insight knowledge called the insight into arising and passing away (*udaya-bbaya-ñāna*). You will find it to excel the human pleasure many times. That is why such *dhamma* pleasure is honored as the pleasure beyond the human one (*amānussī rati*). It is a unique and unquenchable pleasure. It can lead us to the higher level of *dhamma* pleasure, called sensationless pleasure (*avedayita-sukha*), and tranquil pleasure (*santi-sukha*), which refer to as the ultimate peacefulness of *nibbāna*. In order to gain such a high level of happiness and pleasure that has a guarantee, Buddha encouraged the yogis to live up to their names by exerting an ardent effort in the development of the mind and knowledge.

In industrial countries with highly advanced technology and science, people are always pursuing newer and more advanced inventions and they get easily fed up with old fashion products. Even in marriage, people are easily fed up

with their old partners and often find new ones. However, this unique kind of pleasure gained from the *vipassana* meditation is ever lasting, never boring to you. Science and technology will help you to get the worldly comfort, while the *satipathāna* meditation will bring you the celestial kinds of pleasure, such as pleasure of renunciation (*nekkhamma-sukha*), pleasure of seclusion (*paviveka-sukha*), pleasure of tranquility (*upasama-sukha*), and pleasure of enlightenment (*sambodha-sukha*).

Now I would like to explain the *Satipathāna* practice in detail, from both theoretical and practical aspects. I know many of you have already listened to this topic. But listening again to a *Dhamma talk* will enhance your understanding and will clear off your confusion, if any. This meditation guarantees the seven benefits as follows:

*Monks, there are four foundations of mindfulness that is the sure way for beings to purify (themselves of mental defilement), to overcome sorrow and lamentation, to get rid of pain and distress, to attain knowledge, and to experience nibbāna.*

**Awareness of Body:** The four foundations of mindfulness refer to the mindfulness that is firmly established on the four kinds of meditative objects, such as body, sensation, thought, and general object. Among them, the mindfulness of body is described thus: “*kāye kāyā-nupassī viharati*: One lives (or spends his time) being aware of body (physical elements) in the body.” It means one lives or spend one’s time observing the body (physical phenomena, activities or behaviors), such as walking, standing, sitting, lying, bending, stretching, and so on.

**‘Body’ in Ultimate Sense:** Here, the body (*kāya*) refers to the physical phenomena, among which the most obvious

are four fundamental elements, such as earth, water, fire, and wind. We can experience the earth element as hardness, roughness, softness, and suppleness. In our body, for example, we can feel bones hard and skin soft. Actually, the hardness, softness, etc., are not single individuals, but a mass of earth elements. The same is true with the rests of elements. We can experience the fire element as cold, heat or warm; the water element as moisture, wetness, liquidity, lightness or heaviness; we can also feel this water element as somewhat like solid, along with other three elements like solid hardness, solid heat, solid pressure and so on. We can experience the air element as pressure, stiffness, tension, and movement. So, “*kāya*” (body) means a mass of these physical elements in ultimate sense. [Regarding the water element, it is said in *Abhidhamma* that it cannot be touched like the other three. But it can be felt as flowing, oozing, cohesion, which often manifests when you have a runny nose or sweat.]

**See Body as Body:** The Buddha instructed us to observe the body. How to observe it? To see body as body, not as something else. If one sees a stone, for example, one should see it as a stone. Only then, will it be correct. If one sees a piece of gold, one should see it as gold. Only then, will it be correct. In the same way, one should see the body as body, but not as anything else. That means you should not identify the body with something or somebody else that is permanent, pleasurable, and soul-related. In brief, you should spend your time seeing the body as body.

From a practical point of view, however, you should use daily language to note a meditative objects. For instance, you should simply note rising and falling as rising and falling, but not as air element (*vāyo-dhātu*). But you will experience the air element involved in terms of tension, pressure or motion, and so on. The same is true with any other objects. In reality,

any physical behavior involves all the four elements, but the air element is the most obvious in the rising and falling. Remember the *vipassana* formula, “Whatever is obvious, the *vipassana* is focused on that” (*yathā pākatam vipassanā bhiniveso*). So, all you have to do is just to be aware of whatever obvious as they really are by noting the objects in daily language.

In the beginning of the practice, the conceptual form or shape or manner will be obvious at first. You may not yet see the real phenomena beyond them. Suppose, for example, you put a new kind of food into your mouth. First you may experience its hardness or softness and then its taste when you chew it like sweet, sour, bitter, and so on. In the same way, in the beginning of the practice when you note rising, falling, first you are likely to see its form, shape, or manner of movement. Sometimes, you may be merely labeling the object (*nāma-paññatti*) without seeing anything substantial. Later, however, when your effort, mindfulness, and concentration develop, you will be able to see real phenomena beyond those conceptual form, shape, manner or name as the saying goes: “When concept emerges, the ultimate reality will submerge; when the ultimate reality emerges, the concept will submerge.”

When you see the true phenomena, you will no longer experience the shape or form of the whole body or any individual organ. Then you may lose the sense of body shape. At this stage, you can be aware of the real phenomena without using the conceptual names of the objects. Before you reach this stage, your mind may stay with conceptual form or shape or name of an object. But do not worry about it. It is okay, as long as the mind stays with the object. Keep on noting the objects using common language, such as rising, falling or lifting, moving, placing, but not technical terms,

like earth element (*pathavī-dhātu*).

**Labeling or Naming:** There is nothing wrong with labeling if it is made correctly and concurrently. For instance, you note the rising as rising. Such correct labeling is called *tajjā-paññatti*, the name that is consistent with what is really happening. Correct labeling is quite helpful to the precise awareness of an object. When a child starts to read, for example, he or she first has to pronounce the individual alphabets, so that he or she can know the correct pronunciation and correct spelling, and later, correct meaning. The child should read out aloud as c + a + t = cat, r + a + t = rat, and so on. As the child gains skill in reading, he or she can read sentences without spelling them out. In the same way, in the beginning of the practice, you should use the names of the objects for the correct awareness. When your practice gets mature, you will no longer need to use names for your awareness. Regarding this point, *Mahā-tīka* (Great Sub-commentary) makes the explanation with a question and answer thus:

*“Nanu ca tajjāpaññattivaseṇa sabhāvadhammo gayhatīti?”*

*Saccam gayhati pubbabhāge, bhāvanāya pana vaddhamānāya paññattim samatikkamitvā sabhāveveva cittam titthati”.*

“The real phenomena are known with the help of correct names. Isn't it?”

“That is true in the early stage. When the practice gets mature, however, the noting mind will get established only on the real phenomena beyond the concepts.”

**Insight into ‘Body’:** *Kāyā-nupassanā* is composed of two nouns, *Kāya* (body) + *anupassanā* (awareness). Again, *anupassanā* consists of prefix *anu* (repeatedly) + noun

*passanā* (seeing). So it is not enough to just note body a single time only, but you should note it repeatedly, so that its true nature will be clear to you. It is kind of research.

For effective observation, there are three requirements: energetic (*ātāpī*), clear comprehension (*sampajāno*), and mindful (*satimā*). Here, concentration is not mentioned directly, but it always accompanies the mindfulness naturally. Effort, mindfulness and concentration work together in developing insight knowledge. By exerting effort in the practice, mindfulness will take place along with concentration. Then you will experience physical phenomena like stiffness, tension, etc., depending where your mind happens to fall on. Thus, the insight into body will become clear (*sampajañña*).

Physical phenomena (*kāya*) have their own unique characteristics (*sabhāva-lakkhana*). For example, hardness or softness is the unique characteristic of the earth element, and wetness, moisture or cohesion is that of water element, and so on. These individual material qualities are all impermanent, unpleasant, and impersonal (not associated with soul or God). These three facts are their common characteristics (*sāmañña-lakkhanā*).

**To Destroy Delusion:** People think that their bodies are all the same from the day they were born until today. They believe their bodies are pleasant and their delusory sense of 'I / Mine' is also very deep-seated in their heart. Most of them also believe in the supreme soul or the universal soul (*parama atta*) as a creator of this universe who controls their senses and thoughts. They grow old with that deep delusion throughout their lives.

In order to remove this delusion or wrong view, you need to know the truth. In order to know the truth, you need to practice with three kinds of strengths, such as ardent effort

(*ātāpī*), clear comprehension (*sampajāno*), and mindfulness (*satimā*). You have to apply these three strengths to your practice, so that you become aware of whatever is obvious at the present moment whether it is body, sensation, thought or general activities. Then their unique and common characteristics will become clear to you. Thus, you start to see the truth.

In essence, there are only two objects to be aware of, such as mind (*nāma*) and matter (*rūpa*). They arise one moment and dissolve next moment. They are impermanent. Buddha said “*yad’aniccam tam dukkham*: whatever is impermanent, that is unpleasant.” Mind and matter are impermanent; therefore, they are unpleasant. And he also said “*yam dukkham tad’anattā*: whatever unpleasant, that is non-soul.” So, mind and body are not “I / Mine.” Neither are they regarded to be beautiful (*a-subha*).

**Impermanent:** There is a western saying that may explain the law of impermanence: “You cannot step into the same river twice.” Yet, the impermanence they see is still a conceptual idea (*paññatti anicca*). They do not really see impermanence from their own experience. So, their knowledge of impermanence is very superficial. They do not even think the mind and body to be unpleasant and soulless and beautiful.

It is density of mental and physical phenomena (*ghana*) that make people think the mind and body are lasting forever like the continuity of water current that makes a river seem to be forever. Only when you can see real mind and body in terms of their own characteristics can you see them dissolving moment by moment. That is the knowledge of impermanence gained from your own practice experience. Only then will you gain the perception of nonself (*anatta-saññā*). If you observe present objects, you will see real



mental and physical phenomena involved in those very objects in terms of their individual characteristics. And then you will see them passing away from your own experience. Thus, you will gain the perception of impermanence (*anicca-saññā*).

It is not easy to see the truth destroying such a deep-seated delusion without an instrument. For example, if an object is too subtle or minute to see through the naked eyes, we should take the help of the spectacles, a magnifying glass, or a microscope. In the same way, in order to see the truth destroying the delusion, all we have to do to observe present objects with ardent effort, mindfulness, and concentration. In due course of time, we will gain insight knowledge, which enables us to see the truth destroying the deep delusion. That is why the Buddha said, thus: “A monk spends his time seeing body (physical phenomena) in the body, being energetic, clear comprehension, and mindful eradicating covetousness and hatred.”

In conclusion, making effort in noting present objects continuously you can develop the mindfulness and concentration. With the help of these three instruments, you can see real phenomena in terms of stiffness, tension, etc., beyond the conceptual form, shape or manner. Then, you will clearly see them passing away moment by moment. This clear comprehension is called *sampajañña*, which excels all sort of knowledge that you can gain from books, teachers, analyzing, or reasoning.

I will explain how we can realize the truth and what are the immediate benefits we can get from that realization.

*Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī viharati  
ātāpi sampajāno satimā vineyya loke abhijjhā  
domanassam.*

Monks, a monk in this holy order spends his time observing body (physical phenomena) in the body, being energetic, clearly comprehending, and mindful, getting rid of greed and aversion.

Here, the word “*kāyā-nu-passī*” alone clearly explains what the work of meditation is (*kammatthāna*). The word “*kāyā-nu-passanā*” (the noun form of *kāyā-nu-passī*) is composed of three words: “*kāya*” body (physical phenomena), “*anu*” repeatedly or continuously, and “*passanā*” seeing. In view of this word, it is clear that you have to see body (physical phenomena) in the body repeatedly or continuously.

By seeing the real physical phenomena, you can remove the wrong view (*micchā-ditthi*), which is also called *papañca* (what prolongs our cycle of rebirth). The wrong view has its root in wrong perception (*micchā-saññā*). The wrong view is defined in the Commentary thus: “*Avibhūtārammane ditthiyā upatthito*: the view established on what are not really true.” That refers to the delusory sense of permanence, pleasure and person. By noting present objects, you will come to know the true phenomena in terms of their characteristics, such as stiffness, tension, cold, heat, hardness, etc. Then you will also come to know their impermanence, etc., overcoming the delusory sense along with its associate mental defilements, such as greed, anger, jealousy, and so on.

**Clear Comprehension:** *Vipassanā* is the insight into the common characteristics of mind and body, such as impermanence, suffering and nonself. Actually, these characteristics are not really real (*paramattha*) but are something conceptual (*paññatti*). So, they are not what to observe. Mind and body are real (*paramattha*). They are what to observe. By observing mind and body, you will spontaneously see their impermanence, suffering, and nonself. For example, looking at a line of ants from

a distance, you may mistake it for a rope, a string, or a branch of a tree. If you take a closer look, however, you will see the individual ants moving. In the same way, if you can take a closer look at mind and body through effort, mindfulness and concentration, you will see their individual characteristics and their changes (i.e., impermanence). Thus, clear comprehension (*sampajāna*) takes place. Here, the word “*sam-pa-jāna*” is composed of three parts: prefix “*sam*” (distinctly or by oneself), prefix “*pa*” (in several ways or in a special way), noun “*jāna*” (knowing). So, the literal meaning of “*sampajāna*” is “knowing (the truth) distinctly or by oneself in several ways or in an extraordinary way.”

**Three More Objects to Observe:** You also have to observe sensations (*vedanā*), thoughts (*citta*), and general objects (*dhamma*) with the help of ardent effort, mindfulness, and concentration in the same way as the body is observed. Then you will see sensation as sensations or in terms of their individual characteristics. You will see them passing away moment by moment. Similarly, you can also see different thoughts with different characteristics arising at different moment. Thus, you can see mind and body arising and passing away every moment and overcome the delusory sense of permanence, pleasure and person. You also can see the mind with its associate mental defilements led by covetousness and aversion (*vineyya loke abhijjhā-domanassam*).

**Removal of Mental Defilement:** Regarding the removal of mental defilements, there are two ways of removing: by giving no chance for them to arise and by noting them once they arise. Of course, it is *Satipatthāna* meditation that helps you in both ways. From a practical point of view, all you have to do is to note the objects that are obvious at the present moment with ardent effort, mindfulness, and concentration. Then, you see the truth, overcome delusion, and no longer

react against or for the phenomena you experience, meaning you will have no like (*anurodha*) and dislike (*virodha*). Hence, you gain tranquility and peacefulness.

**Do not be a Chronic Yogi:** Some of the yogis are likely to say, “ I have practiced with so and so teacher for so and so long retreat.” Unless they can practice with ardent effort, mindfulness and concentration, they cannot make progress in the practice. It is just like a patient who sees this or that physician but does not take the prescribed medicine according to the dosage. Later, the illness, being immune to the medicines, becomes incurable or chronic. In the same way, no matter however long you have been practicing under so and so teachers, if you do not practice properly according to the guidance given, you will not get anywhere; you will become a chronic yogi. So, instead of taking pride in how long and how many teachers, you should try your best to note objects obvious at present moment, so that you will not become a chronic yogi.

**Description of Concentration:** With mature *vipassana* practice, the momentary concentration becomes powerful. There will be no wandering thought when the mind is fully focused on the objects. The lack of wandering thought is the characteristic of *samādhi* (*avikkhepo samādhi*). The function of *samādhi* (*rasa*) is to concentrate the mind on the object (*sambindana-rasa*). *Jhāna* concentration fully focuses the mind on a single conceptual object (*paññatti*) while in *vipassanā* practice, you develop the momentary concentration by noting presents objects moment by moment.

**Concentration Versus Defilements:** Naturally, the stronger the concentration becomes, the weaker the mental defilements become. *Jhāna* concentration is so powerful that the gross form of defilements cannot arise for a long period. You may even mistake this state as an *arahatship*.

As for the *vipassana*, momentary concentration gained from being aware of present objects moment by moment can help you overcome mental defilements moment by moment. This momentary concentration, if strong enough, can help keep your mind away from mental defilements for long. Under such strong *vipassana* concentration, the sense-objects cannot arouse mental defilement, even if you fail to note them or you take a break from the practice for some time. At the higher levels of insight knowledge, the mental defilements may not be active, even if you purposely activate them. These two kinds of long-lasting eradication of mental defilements are called by several names, such as *vikkhambhana-pahāna*, *vikkhambhana-vinaya*, *vikkhambhana-vimutti*.

**Wisdom Arises from Lack of Defilement:** Being away from mental defilement (*kilesa-dūrībhāva*) is the main cause of wisdom. How can the mental defilements be kept away? A *Dhammapada* verse says thus: “*Yogā ve jāyati būrī ayogā būrisaṅkhayo*: Effort arouses vast wisdom; lack of the effort erodes vast wisdom.” Here, “*būrī*” originally means the vast earth. The knowledge is regarded to be as vast as the earth. It means that, by noting the present object with diligence and mindfulness, vast wisdom will take place enabling you to see real phenomena and their causality, impermanence, unpleasantness, and impersonality. If you are lazy and do not put effort in the practice, according to the guidance given, you cannot develop such vast wisdom.

From the practical aspect, the only duty a yogi needs to carry out is to keep on noting continuously whatever object is obvious, whether they are physical, sensational, mental, or general. In due course of time, yogi will gain wisdom that enables you to see the truth and to abandon mental defilements.

**What to Start Your Practice With:** Previously I have explained the awareness of thought (*cittā-nupassanā*) based on the instruction given by the late Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw, according to the *Pali* texts. If you had gained *jhāna* through the *samatha* practice, you could observe the *jhānic* mental factors (*mahaggata-citta*) to develop the awareness of mind. Otherwise, you have to observe the sense-related thoughts (*kamāvacara-citta*) to develop it.

To develop the awareness of thought, you do not intentionally look for a thought to note. Do observe physical objects that are obvious. You will find several kinds of thought arising. Then, you just note them as they really are. That is how to develop the awareness of mind or thoughts (*cittā-nupassanā*). In accordance with *Satipatthāna Sutta*, it is not correct to start your practice finding thoughts to note. As I mentioned repeatedly, you should start *vipassanā* meditation by noting the most obvious object. Physical objects are the most obvious ones. Again, the air element (*vāyo-dhātu*) is the most obvious among the physical objects. That is why we recommend you to start your practice noting the air-generated physical objects, like in-and-out breath or rising and falling of the abdomen. When your practice gains momentum, however, you can start your practice noting whatever obvious.

The Buddha gave *dhamma*-talks in three different orders: topics (*desanā-kkama*), events (*pavatti-kkama*), and practice (*padhāna-kkama*). According to the *Satipatthāna Sutta*, however, there is no specific advice on what object one should start one's practice with. But in the beginning of the practice, the best way is to follow the *vipassana* formula: "Whatever is obvious, *vipassana* is focused on that." That is why we highly recommend you to start practice by noting rising and falling of the abdomen as a home object, because

it is always available and easily noticeable. When your insight becomes more mature, you can note any object most obvious without making choice.

When noting physical phenomena, the various thoughts often interfere. You should note them as they really are. That is the awareness of thought (*cittā-nupassanā*). When a painful sensation becomes obvious, note it as it is. That is the awareness of sensation (*vedanā-nupassanā*). And, when other general objects, such as seeing or hearing, etc., are obvious, note them as they really are. That is the awareness of general objects (*dhammānupassanā*). By practicing thus, you can see real phenomena and you can reduce the delusory sense of permanence, pleasure, and person. I will not explain progressive insight knowledge in detail, lest you may form preconceived idea and make wrong judgment of your experience. Other than the Buddha, nobody is in the position to make judgment of your level of insight knowledge. Even the Venerable *Sāriputta*, who was honored to be the wisest next to the Buddha, did not do that way. When working out mathematical problems, for example, the teacher explains how to solve this problem. If you follow the method systematically, you will get the answer and solve the problem. In the same way, the meditation teachers give you guidance and instructions on how to practice and, if you follow them, you will get the answers and the benefits.

**The Meaning of Sati-patthāna:** I was told that there are some yogis who are confused about the instruction given. I have been instructing you to note whatever is obvious right away so that yogis can keep pace with the present objects that are arising moment by moment. I also said that there should not be any thinking, analyzing, or reasoning. Regarding this point, some of the yogis got confused, that without thinking, how can one know these objects correctly. In order to dispel

their confusion and doubts, now I have to explain what *Satipatthāna* means.

In the word *Sati-patthāna*, *sati* means mindfulness or awareness and *patthāna* is composed of “*pa*” (firmly) and “*tthāna*” (established). So, *sati-pa-tthāna* literally means the mindfulness that is firmly established (on such objects as body, sensation, thought, and general objects). Actually, the prefix “*pa*” is defined in several other ways such as “speedily” (*pakkhanditvā*), “deeply” (*okkantitvā*), “remarkably” (*visittha*), “strongly” (*bhusa*), and “exceedingly” (*atisaya*). According to these definitions, the noting mind should rush toward the object speedily without delay, so that you can catch present objects. It should penetrate into the object deeply like a stone thrown into the water, not like a cork floating on the surface, in order that you can experience real phenomena. The noting mind should be established on the objects remarkably, strongly, and exceedingly, so that you can see the real phenomena, their interaction, and their impermanence, unpleasantness and impersonality.

**Adjustment of Mental Powers:** There are two kinds of mental powers: reasoning power (*patisankhāna-bala*) and developed power that is gained through mental development practice (*bhāvanā-bala*). In the secular life, the reasoning power or logical thinking is certainly beneficial. However, in the *vipassana* practice you must give priority to the developed power.

Logical thinking (*takka*) will multiply uselessly (*takka-vaddhana*), if it is not based on the experience of actual facts that are worthy of faith. This kind of thinking is called *sukka-takka*, mere thinking leading nowhere. It can even be an obstacle to the knowledge. In addition, when logical thinking helps you learn something meaningful, it will make you proud of yourself. That is why it is said that logical



thinking is the source of extreme conceit (*takkam atimānassa mūlam*). Such conceit is called “I’m-so-and-so conceit” (*asmi-māna*). For example, you may think highly of yourself, “I am well educated. I am a genius. I am a scientist.” Such conceit prevents you from gaining higher knowledge.

Developed power is needed in the *satipatthāna* meditation. To practice *satipatthāna* meditation, you need to have five kinds of developed mental power (*bala*), such as faith and confidence (*saddhā*), effort or courage (*vīriya*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom or knowledge (*paññā*). All these powers, except the mindfulness, can be either deficient or excessive. So it is important to adjust them. The excessive faith, weakening the reasoning power, leads you to blind faith and delusion. Too much knowledge makes you difficult to believe in anything and end up with confusion. If you are too eager or excited for the spiritual achievement, you may make the excessive effort without suitable amount of concentration, the mind will become restless. When the concentration becomes strong enough to note objects without making much effort, you will encounter sloth and torpor. As for mindfulness, it is never excessive. It is always the more the better. In order to have such exceptional quality *sati*, you should try your best to note present objects without thinking, analyzing, or reasoning. Otherwise, you cannot catch the present objects to experience real phenomena (*atta-paccakkha*) so that you gain the empirical knowledge.

**Three Ways of Realization:** There are three ways of realization (*siddha*): by own experience (*paccakkha-siddha*), by inference (*anumāna-siddha*), and by faith (*okappana-siddha* or *saddheyya-siddha*).

In the case of *vipassana* practice, when sitting down from standing position, for example, if you do it mindfully,

you will see the series of intention to sit down (mental phenomena), and the sitting body that is characterized by heaviness, hardness, motion and movement (physical phenomena). Depending on how mature your concentration and mindfulness are, you will realize that they are nothing but mental and physical phenomena, their interaction, and their passing away. This is the realization by your own experience (*paccakkha-siddha*).

Based on your own experience, you will realize by inference that whatever exists in the past or in the future, or in oneself or in other people, are all mental and physical phenomena that are impermanent, unpleasant, and impersonal. This is the realization by inference (*anumāna-siddha*). This kind of realization must be based on one's own experience. Only then, would it be reliable.

The last one is the realization by faith (*okappana-siddha*). There are cases in which you have to accept something to be true without your own experience or knowledge just because it is worthy of faith based on common sense. Too much thinking can even make you crazy. *Satipatthāna* meditation is to gain the empirical knowledge (*paccakkha-ñāna*). Before or at the beginning of the practice, however, you cannot yet appreciate it yet. So, you just accept it to be true by faith based on common sense.

From practical point of view, all you have to do is to note objects obvious at present moment with aiming and effort. When the mindfulness and concentration get mature, you will see the real phenomena in terms of their individual and common characteristics. Then you will have no more laziness, confusion, or doubt, and your mind will no longer be agitated with greed, anger, hatred, envy, jealousy, and so on.

**Four Great Principles:** Whatever work you do, you need to have certain principles. If you follow wrong principles, you do wrong things and will have to suffer great loss. That is why the correct principles are the most important in life. The same is true with *Satipatthāna* meditation. You need correct principles to practice it so that you can enjoy its full benefits without much difficulty.

The *Pāli* text mentions four general principles (*mahā-padesa*): principles that comes directly from *Pāli* canon (*sutta*), principles from commentaries or sub-commentaries that are in harmony with *Pāli* canon (*suttā-nuloma*), principles given by teachers in accordance with the first two (*ācariya-vāda*), and principles based on one's own ideas (*attano-mati*). Among them, the last one is the weakest and the first two are the strongest, of course. Regarding the third one, it is important to have a teacher who gives guidance based on the first two principles. There are some people who create new principles based on their own idea after having practiced just a little bit of this and that method. You must be careful about their teachings, so that you will not get misled. Or, if you are working with your own idea (*attano-mati*), you must take great care so that you will not make any fatal mistake.

**Potpourri Curry:** Nowadays, the *Satipatthāna* meditation is quite popular in the world. Unfortunately, there are some meditation teachers who are teaching from the notes they have learnt from various teachers. Their teachings are based on their notes, but not on the solid principles. So their meditation methods are mixed up and become “potpourri meditation.” When you cook “potpourri curry,” you have to put so many ingredients in a pot, a little bit of this, a little bit of that. If all the ingredients are good flavors, it should be okay. However, if there is any awful ingredient among them,

the whole pot will be spoiled. I do not want you to taste such spoiled potpourri curry.

**Domain of Kilesa or Wisdom:** Our mind and body are domain or territory of either kilesa or wisdom. If we are not mindful of our mind and body, *kilesa* (mental defilement) will conquer them. Thus, they become *kilesa's* domain (*kilesa-bhūmi*) and we have to live a life under *kilesa's* control. If we are mindful of our mind and body, wisdom takes place from the awareness of them. So, our mind and body become the wisdom's domain, or *vipassana's* domain (*paññā-bhūmi* or *vipassanā-bhūmi*).

When you grow useful plants in a garden, for example, you should prevent weeds and creepers from growing. Or, if you find them grow there, you should remove them right away. Otherwise, the valuable plants will not get enough oxygen, water, and soil. In forestry, it is called improvement felling, thinning. In the same way, on your mind and body, if *kilesa* weeds grow, wisdom (*vipassana* sapling) cannot grow. Therefore, you should prevent the *kilesa* weeds and creepers from growing on your mind and body. If you find them growing, you should remove them right away with mindfulness. During intensive retreat, you should put aside the other affairs that are not as important as the practice. You should try your best not to lose something precious in exchange for something else trivial. As the saying goes, "One loses an axe in order to get a needle."

**The Definition of "Pa":** The word "*pa-tthāna*" is defined as "*pa*" (*pakkhanditvā*) in a rushing manner and "*thāna*" (*pavattati*) arises. So "*sati-pa-tthāna*" literally means the mindfulness that arises in a rushing manner. In accordance with this definition, you should note an object in a rushing manner, so that you will not miss any single moment of present phenomena involved in it. Children who love sports,

for example, rush into the stadium when the match comes nearer. They get seats to watch the game without caring about anyone around so that they will not miss any single moment of the game. In the same way, as a yogi you should rush to the present objects without letting your mind astray, so that you will not miss any single moment of the phenomena arising at present moment.

Another definition of “*pa*” is “in a spreading manner” (*pattaretvā*). “*Sati-pa-itthāna*” is therefore the mindfulness that arises in a spreading manner or the mindfulness that spreads all over the objects. That means you should try your best to be aware of an object entirely, not partially. When you note rising, for instance, you should follow it from beginning to the end by being aware of the entire process of it or entire phenomena involved in it. The same is true with falling and any other objects you note, such as lifting, moving and dropping of the foot, and so on.

By practicing that way, your concentration and mindfulness become mature enough to see the truth, fulfilling three trainings, such as morality, concentration, and wisdom, eradicating three forms of mental defilements including transgressive form, active form, and dormant form, respectively.

***Kalyāna-mitta***: In order for having such a spiritual accomplishment, one of the requirements is to have a good friend (*kalyāna-mitta*). A good friend is someone such as parents, brother, sister, friends or relatives, or anybody else who are endowed with seven qualities: lovable for his or her good moral conducts (*piya*), admirable for his or her wisdom, possessing loving kindness and compassion (*garu*), worthy of being sent *metta* toward for the first two qualities (*bhāvanīya*), capable of correcting other’s mistakes and shortcomings (*vattā*), smart enough to appreciate other’s

advice and admonishment (*vacana-kkhamo*), capable of teaching profound *dhamma* from practical and theoretical aspects, such as thirty-seven requisites of enlightenment, including the four foundations of mindfulness and the four noble truths (*gambhīrañca kantham kattā*), and not supportive of anybody in doing unwholesome things (*yo cātthāne niyojako*). If you can find such a good friend, you are bound to accomplish your spiritual goal.

Regarding *kalyāna-mitta*, what are the reasons one is loved by others? *Pāli* texts, such as *Anguttara Atthakathā* and *Visudhi-magga*, explain about this. One is endowed with faith in *kamma*. One believes that good deeds bring good results, bad deeds bring bad results, just like healthy food and junk food that respectively make one healthy and sick. One also has faith in other faith-worthy things (*Saddheyya-vatthu*). One believes *dhamma* to be righteously taught by the Buddha (*svākkhāta*), because the *dhamma* helps one to purify one's mind and to discern the truth. Faith in the *dhamma* naturally leads to faith in the *Sangha* who practice and accomplish the *dhamma* (*sīla, samādhi, paññā*). One also has faith in past and future existences. Thus, having faith in what is worthy of faith, one can become morally pure (*sīla*), knowledgeable (*suta*), kind and generous (*cāga*). Thus, one can uplift the quality of life.

One should choose a teacher or a leader based on the qualities of *kalyāna-mitta*. The Buddha was endowed with omniscience (*sabbaññuta-ñāna*) which enabled him to teach us what to refrain from and what to perform. He was also endowed with knowledge and practice (*vijjā-carana*) and great compassion (*mahā-karunā*). These two qualities, knowledge and compassion, make someone an ideal teacher who can guide others to do good and to avoid evil. Such a teacher is loved by others, although he or she may not wish

to be so.

Such a teacher is qualified as *kalyāna-mitta* who is capable not only to correct other's mistakes, but also to appreciate the suitable advice and admonishment made by others. As an example, we take Venerable *Sariputtara*. One day, a seven-year-old novice pointed out that Venerable *Sariputtara* did not wear his robes properly. Venerable *Sariputtara* respectfully accepted the novice's admonishment. Such a teacher is loved by others (*piya*), respected by others (*garu*), sent *metta* and *karuna* towards by others (*bhāvanīya*), capable of pointing out people's wrongdoings (*pāpa-garahī*), capable of correcting people's mistakes (*vattā*), and smart enough to appreciate people's advice and admonishment (*vacana-kkhamā*). For example, drug-addicted parents will not be able to guide their children to not use drugs. The parents who gamble a lot will not be able to guide their children to not gamble. That is why parents should have good moral conducts, so that they can become *kalyāna-mitta* for their children.

In order to teach profound *dhamma* (*gambhīrañca katham kattā*), such as the Fourfold Noble Truth, the Dependent Origination, *Jhāna* Absorption, *Vipassana* Insights, and *Magga-phala* Enlightenment, one should be endowed with two kinds of knowledge: theoretical knowledge (*āgama-suta*) and practical knowledge (*adhigama-suta*). To explain the fourfold Noble Truths, for instance, theory alone will not work at all. So one should practice. Then one will realize the impermanence by seeing mental and physical phenomena arising and passing away. Seeing impermanence means seeing the truth of suffering. When one sees the truth of suffering, one's attachment to anything or anybody will decrease or disappear. Thus, one can get rid of the attachment, the origin of suffering, and reach the cessation of suffering.

For example, at the moment of sitting down from a standing position, there is a series of intentions to sit down (mental phenomena) and the process of actual sitting (physical phenomena). Being impermanent, they are regarded as suffering. Seeing them as they really are is seeing the truth of suffering (*dukkha-sacca*). If one fails to note them at the moment of arising, one will not know this truth (*dukkha-sacca*). It is called ignorance of suffering (*dukkhe añānam*), which attaches oneself to the suffering (mind and body). By discerning mind and body or the truth of suffering, one will overcome attachment. So, cessation of attachment means cessation of suffering (*nirodha-sacca*). Knowing the truth, one will no longer do good or bad deeds with desire for further existences. One will only do good deeds without wishing for any existence (*vivatta-gāmi-kusala*). One will only be doing wholesome deeds that will not lead to further existences. Then cycles of resultant phenomena (*vipāka-vatta*) will cease.

So every moment of awareness involves a noble eightfold path or the three trainings. In other words, every noting leads to the eradication of ignorance, craving, and clinging. A teacher should be able to teach the four Noble Truths, both theoretically and practically, so that the students can perform the wholesomeness that leads to cessation of the cycle of suffering (*vivatta-gāmi-kusala*).

If the yogis are advised to note only the mind, not the physical activities and sensations even when very obvious, it will be hard for yogis to see real phenomena and the truth of suffering (*dukkha-sacca*), let alone to reduce or remove ignorance, craving, and clinging. Thus, the round of defilements (*kilesa-vatta*) and the round of kamma (*kamma-vatta*) will keep going on and on, leading to a further round of suffering (*vipāka-vatta*). The Buddha never said that



one should practice only the awareness of mind. Actually, he instructed us to observe the body, sensation, thought, and other general phenomena, so that one can discern the real mind and body or the truth of suffering. The failure to be aware of them means ignorance of suffering (*dukkhe añānam*). Therefore, you should check whether you are practicing in accordance with the teaching of the Buddha. Buddha instructed us to observe whatever is obvious whether physical, sensational, mental, or general.

Here, some people criticize that moving or doing slowly and mindfully is funny and ridiculous. Yogis are here practicing according to the teaching of the Buddha. Such criticism can mean insulting the Buddha and *dhamma*. They do not know the scriptures, the original teachings of the Buddha and think the way they are doing is right. So one should seek the correct guidance from a true friend (*kalyāna-mitta*). *Vipassana* meditation is all about the awareness of mental and physical phenomena that are regarded as suffering (*dukkha-sacca*). By knowing the *dukkha-sacca*, other noble truths will also be known. With experience of *nibbāna* (*nirodah-saccā*) at the moment of *magga* enlightenment (*magga-sacca*), one will accomplish the insight into the truth of suffering (*dukkha-sacca*) and the eradication of attachment, which is the origin of suffering (*samudaya-sacca*). When realizing *nibbāna* (*nirodha-sacca*), one spontaneously accomplishes all the other three truths (*sacca*). Before that, however, one can only accomplish the preliminary knowledge of Four Noble Truths, based on the awareness of *dukkha-sacca* (i.e., mental and physical phenomena).

When you realize the Fourfold Noble Truth, you will no longer think highly of sensual pleasures, which are called by several different names such as sensual pleasure (*kama-sukha*), filthy or foul pleasure (*mila-sukha*), ignoble

pleasure (*anariya-sukha*), and worldly pleasure (*puttojana-sukha*). Instead, you will enjoy the pleasure of renunciation (*nekamma-sukha*), pleasure of seclusion (*paviveka-sukha*) or the pleasure of ultimate peacefulness (*upasamma-sukha*).

In order to develop the mind and wisdom or, in order to uplift quality of life, it is important for you to practice three trainings under the guidance of *kalyāna-mitta*. With this purpose, you should be courageous to give up the sensual pleasure in exchange of *dhamma* pleasure. This is kind of a “give and take” (*pariggaha* and *pariccāga*). Regarding the sensual pleasure, the more you get, the more you want. Thus, the insatiable desire enslaves you forever. And you are prone to suffer psychological or mental problems such as stress, tension, depression, or a nervous breakdown when your desires cannot be fulfilled. If you can be content with whatever you have, you can find more time to practice meditation to keep your mind tranquil.

Actually, only when you reach the third level of enlightenment (*anāgāmi-magga*), can you uproot this sensual desire (*kāma-rāga*). However, mature *satipatthāna* meditators and the first two level enlighteners neither commit sexual misconduct, although they still have lustful feeling (*kāma-rāga*), nor any other evil acts that can lead them to lower rebirth. If you have practiced *Satipatthana* meditation to a satisfactory level, you will have control over your body, speech, and mind. It can be compared to a skilled driver who drives at the correct speed following the traffic regulations with control of the steering wheel and brake.

**Three Stages of Vīriya:** A *kalyāna-mitta* should be endowed with courageous effort (*vīriya-sampanno hoti*). *Vīriya* is normally translated as effort, energy, or diligence, but its literal meaning is courage to perform wholesome deeds and to refrain from unwholesome things. In other

words, *vīriya* is to fulfill three trainings, such as morality, concentration and wisdom, and to uproot three forms of mental defilements, such as transgressive form, active form, and dormant form. With such courage, you can fully enjoy wholesome benefits and can get freed from evil or internal dangers. For spiritual accomplishment, you need to cultivate three stages of *vīriya* as mentioned previously: launching effort (*arambha-dhātu*), persistent effort (*nikkama-dhātu*) and culminating effort (*parakkama-dhātu*).

During sitting meditation, for example, you have to put effort in noting the primary object of rising and falling of the abdomen. That is the launching energy or initial effort (*ārambha-dhātu*). After some time, however, you may want to relax and stay in comfort. This is kind of laziness, the nearest enemy to the practice. People always try their best to live in comfort and are always reluctant to give up their comfort. When they encounter discomfort, they easily give up their effort by changing their posture, opening their eyes, or moving around. This shows that they are lack of courage. In this kind of situation, it is very important to develop persistent effort (*nikkama-dhātu*), so that you can gain victory over the nearest enemy, the laziness. Thus, you should keep on making effort until it culminates in your goal (*parakkama-dhātu*). Thus, you are regarded as being endowed with courageous effort (*vīriya-sampatti*).

A kalyāna-mitta should also be endowed with well-established mindfulness (*sati-sampattiyā upatthita-sati hoti*). Having mindfulness, you are preventing the defilements from arising. You will be free from mental defilements moment by moment. That is called *mutti* or *vimutti* liberation. Then you will have little or no agitation with mental defilements. The desirable objects cannot bring lustful feeling to you, and undesirable object cannot make you angry or upset. And

your mind will become tranquil and powerful enough to see the truth. Then you can enjoy the pleasure of seclusion (*paviveka-sukha*), pleasure of tranquility (*upasama-sukha*), and pleasure of insight knowledge (*sambodha-sukha*).

**In This Very Life:** You can taste this kind of *dhamma* pleasure at the fourth level of insight knowledge, called the insight into arising and passing away (*udaya-bbaya-ñāna*). At this stage, you will feel spiritually delightful and physically pleasant with all kinds of beautiful mental factors (*sobhana cetasika*). That is why this *dhamma* pleasure is glorified as “*amānusī rati*,” the pleasure beyond the human ones. More encouraging is, if you reach this stage, you are regarded to be talented for the attainment of supramundane knowledge (*lokuttara-ñāna*) in this very life. There are five requirements for gaining the supramundane knowledge in this very life, such as strong faith, good health, honesty, courageous effort, and the insight into arising and passing away (*udaya-bbaya-ñāna*). If you meet all the five requirements and continue to practice, you are bound to attain *magga-phala* enlightenment and *nibbana* in this very life (*ariya-magga-phala-ñāna*).

## Conclusion

Today, we are here to celebrate the auspicious ceremony to mark successful completion of a six-week intensive meditation retreat. This success must be attributed to the kindness and care rendered by the committee of Tathagata Meditation Center and many other volunteers and supporters. Moreover, we owe a lot to them for this newly built *dhamma* hall that makes yogis' practice smooth and comfortable.

It is said that one's spiritual achievement links to the supply of four requisites (*paccaya-patibaddhā hi kula-puttānam samana-dhamma-vuddhi*). Without supply of four requisites, it is almost impossible to take an intensive meditation retreat like this. Now, we can complete this six-week intensive retreat successfully, because TMC took great care of our food, lodging, and medical assistance. It is also very satisfying that the Asian Buddhists who have settled in this country, come and support the center with food and other necessities whenever they have the opportunity.

There are some differences between ways of supporting the Buddha-sāsana in the olden days, in the Buddha's time, and nowadays. In the *sasana* history from its very beginning until the Buddha's demise, the devotees themselves practiced *Satipatthāna* meditation to a satisfactory level and supported the *sasana* with necessary things. Without practicing *Satipatthāna* meditation, you cannot appreciate the true essence of *sāsana*. During the Buddha's time, many devotees practiced *Satipatthāna* meditation and became *sotāpanna*, *sakadāgāmi*, *anāgāmi*, and *arahat*. After having practiced

*Satipatthāna* meditation, they understood very well what was necessary and what was suitable for the *sasana* and for the monks who were propagating the *sasana*. Thus, they managed to provide what was needed and filled up what was short of. In this way, they could support the *sasana* in the way the Buddha and the *sangha* prefer.

Regarding TMC devotees, I am very glad that they all practiced *Satipatthana* meditation to a certain extent. I would like to see all of you to be like *Anātha-pindika* and *Visākā*, the lay devotees during the Buddha's time who practiced *satipatthana* meditation to a satisfactory level and supported the four requisites to *sāsana*. Being well supplied with four requisites, the *sangha* also could comfortably practice to a satisfactory level. So, I would like to see both the devotees and the *sangha* here practice *satipatthana* meditation to a satisfactory level.

During this six-week retreat, everything went very smooth. TMC took great care of yogis' needs, and the yogis were well-disciplined following the guidance given by the teachers. This retreat will be impressed in my memory for life. I have faith and confidence that I will see TMC to be more and more successful in the future.

By practicing the Buddha's teaching, you beautify and adorn the *sāsana* and make it propagate and proliferate in quality and quantity. Based on *Anguttara Nikaya, Sobhana Sutta*, I will conclude my talk to inspire you:

*cattarome bhikkhave viyattā vinītā visāradā  
bahussutā dhamma-dharā dhammā-nudhamma-  
patipannā sangham sobhanti.*

Oh monks, these four (audiences) that are well learned, well disciplined, having self-confidence, well informed, bearing *dhamma* in mind, practicing

*dhamma* that leads to the enlightenment to beautify *sangha* (the Buddhist community).

There are the four kinds of audiences in the Holy Order: monks (*bhikkhu*), nuns (*bhikkhuni*), male devotees (*upāsaka*), and female devotees (*upasika*). If they are endowed with the six qualities, such as being well-versed in the Buddha's teaching (*viyatta*), well-disciplined under the monastic rules and regulations (*vinīta*), gained self-confidence by avoiding inferior or unwholesome deeds (*visārada*), being well-informed theoretically and practically (*bahu-suta*), bearing *dhamma* (correct method of practice) in mind (*dhamma-dhara*), and practicing *dhamma* (three trainings) that leads to nine kinds of supramundane knowledge, such as four *magga*, four *phala* and *nibbāna* (*dhammā-nudhamma-patipanna*), they would be beautifying and adorning the *sangha* (Buddhist community).

Nowadays, we have only three audiences in our *Theravada* tradition as nuns (*bhikkhuni*) are no longer available, although they still exist in the other traditions. So, I call the nuns of today as *silavatī* or *sikkhavatī*, meaning, respectively, the possessor of *sīla* and the possessor of the three trainings, instead of calling them “*bhikkhunī*.” Anyway, the nuns of today substitute for *bhikkhunis* of olden days. The four audiences proliferate in quantity but decline in quality; they do not meet the standard of the olden days. They need the above-mentioned six qualities to adorn and beautify the *sasana*.

I would like to elaborate on these six qualities. First of all is being well versed in the teaching of the Buddha (*viyatta*). Whatever you do for yourself or others, you should think about whether it is beneficial or suitable. Although it is beneficial and suitable, you should do it only at right time. This type of quality is called *viyatta*. You can apply this

quality not only to the *dhamma*, but also to daily life.

The second one is to be well disciplined (*vinīta*). Only if you can overcome the rudeness that has been following throughout the round of existences, can you be regarded as well disciplined. In order to remove the transgressive form of defilements, you need to observe morality. To overcome the defilements that are active in the mind, you should apply the mindfulness right away. To uproot the latent or dormant form of defilements, you have to practice *satipatthana* meditation until the attainment of *magga-phala* enlightenment. At least you attain the first level of enlightenment (*sotapatti-magga*), you would be free from certain kinds of mental defilements that can lead you to inferior states. So, through the *magga-phala* enlightenment, you can become really well-disciplined.

The third one is confidence based on knowledge (*visāra*). Without the practice of mindfulness, you cannot overcome the delusory sense of permanence, pleasure, and person regarding the mind and body. Based on this delusion, the mental defilements increase degrading quality of life and leading to lower rebirths. So these mental defilements are always threatening to you. That is why they are called *sāra-kara*, because they make you a coward and devoid of confidence. If you can remove them, you will become courageous and confident. *Satipatthana* meditation is the best way to remove them and to strengthen confidence.

The fourth quality is being well-informed or knowledgeable (*bahu-suta*). If you seek knowledge with good aim and objective, it will be beneficial for yourself and others. Learning the Buddhist teachings with good aim and objective will increase the knowledge (*bahu-suta*). Meeting the Buddha-*sāsana* in this very life, you should have at least the knowledge of the correct method to practice. If you want



more knowledge, you can learn or read. The more knowledge you have, the better.

The fifth quality is to bear *dhamma* in one's mind (*dhamma-dhara*). What you have learned should be born in your heart, so that you will not forget it.

These two qualities, knowledgeable and bearing *dhamma* in mind, are very essential to work for the welfare of others or to teach the *dhamma* to others. If you practice yourself, you need to have knowledge of how to practice the three trainings, such as morality, concentration, and wisdom. And you should bear the correct method in mind and put it into practice, so that you can go straight and lead others to the goal. Taking advantage of your human life, you should have knowledge of how to fulfill three trainings.

The sixth quality is practicing *dhamma* (*dhammā-nudhamma-patipanna*). It consists of three parts: *dhamma*, *anudhamma*, and *patipanna*. “*Dhamma*” here refers to nine kinds of supramundane knowledge; “*anu-dhamma*” to the three trainings; “*patipanna*” means to practice. So, its literal meaning is to practice three trainings that lead you to the supramundane knowledge. To fulfill three trainings, all you have to do is to practice *Satipatthana* meditation.

In order to reach such spiritual accomplishment, you should practice every day by noting present objects until you gain the path and fruition knowledge and *nibbāna*. In conclusion, I would like to ask you to march straight on the *dhamma* road with the slogan “quantity to quality,” by purifying yourself and beautifying the *sāsana*.

Sadhu! Sadhu! Sadhu!

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## **Sharing Merits**

May all beings share this merit  
Which we have thus acquired  
For the acquisition of all kinds of happiness

May beings inhabiting space and earth,  
Devas and nāgas of mighty power  
Share this merit of ours  
May they long protect the teachings!

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In our Buddhist society there is a saying: "The true culture is the true essence of a human being."

The "true culture" would be interpreted in different ways in different communities in the world. In the Buddha's teachings, the true culture is self-restraint that protects oneself and others from dangers or refrains oneself from wrong doings. In other words, it is the purification of the mind from mental defilements such as greed, anger, hatred, jealousy...

Mindfulness meditation (Satipatthāna) is the greatest Dhamma gift given by the Buddha to us as a sure way to purify our mind from mental defilements. It is the true spiritual cultivation.

Sayadaw U Panditābhivamsa



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